

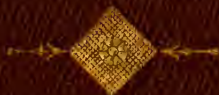
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# SOUL FOOD

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# SOUL FOOD:

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CHAPTERS ON THE INTERIOR LIFE.

WITH

PASSAGES OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.



BY

GEORGE D. WATSON,

Author of "White Robes," "Holmes' Manual," "Coals of Fire," "Seven Overcomeths," "Fruits of Canaan," "Beauty for Ashes," etc.

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M. W. KNAPP,

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## I. SOUL FOOD.

THE soul has its appropriate food, and its mystical way of eating and digesting, just as really as the body. The soul feeds on truth and love, and the divine personalities. It feeds on truth through the intellect ; it feeds on love through the affections ; and it feeds on divine personalities through the choices and appropriations of the will.

### 1. The conditions of soul-feeding.

These are—first, life ; second, health ; third, zest. In regeneration, the Christ-life is imparted to the soul. This life, like all other kinds, is known by its characteristics. All life is invisible and inscrutable. We may search all living substances, but no microscope has ever yet found what life is. It is a fathomless mystery, whether in vegetable, animal, or spirit, and known only to God.

But we know that Christ can and does impart His life to the penitent, believing soul ; and we know that this Christ-life can feed and grow and manifest itself similiar to other kinds of life. It is not only needful to have this life, but to have it in a state of good soul-health. This implies the being cleansed from all moral

disease, from all evil tempers and evil desires, from all self-will, and every principle of the carnal mind. Until the spiritual nature is thoroughly sanctified, its appetite is poor, its digestion is weak, and it craves a very light diet of religious food, made up largely of human intellectuality. For the soul to feed well, it not only needs life and health, but a lively zest of the faculties. This zest is acquired by practice, and by the quality of food the soul takes in.

## 2. The manner of soul-feeding.

In the mystical process of feeding the soul, perception of truth corresponds to eating, by which truth is taken into the mind. The more rapidly and clearly we apprehend all kinds of spiritual truth, the more largely do we eat; for just what taking food in the mouth and chewing it is to the body, the clear analysis and vivid apprehension of truth is to the soul; so that our perceptions are the mouth of the spirit. Faith is the digestive organ of the soul. It is by faith that the truth is dissolved and prepared to make living substance. Unless we have real, strong faith, the truth we perceive is not converted into living substance. A spiritual dyspeptic is one who has large perceptions of truth, but no adequate faith to digest it and turn it into experience. Just as the stomach of the body is often ruined by alcohol, tobacco, and other poisons and stimulants, until its digestive organs are ruined, so the stomach of the soul is often ruined by mental stim-

ulants, such as novels, philosophy, and false doctrines, until the digestive power of faith is well-nigh destroyed.

Love is the blood of the spiritual life. When the food in the stomach has been digested, it resembles milk; then it is conveyed into the lungs, where it is cooked by the oxygen of the air, and becomes beautiful red blood; it is then poured into the heart, and the heart, like a steam-pump, throws it all over the body, to build up the wasted organs.

This same process is carried on in the soul. Truth is perceived by the intellect, digested by the faith, and through the constant in-breathing of the divine Spirit this digested truth is turned into love, which constitutes the very life and substance of the spiritual man. Every atom of the body is made out of blood. In like manner the very body of the true Christian life is made out of love.

There is one more step in this analogy, and that is as to what is termed the stored-up substance of the body. The human body will subsist for some weeks on its stored-up substance, which is mysteriously concealed in the flesh. When the body goes without food, the heart and brain, which are vital centers, will consume the reserved forces of the body and draw the substance out of the flesh until the body becomes a skeleton. Many persons have wondered where the flesh went when people have no food. The answer is,

the flesh is gradually turned back into blood again, and flows back to the heart and brain.

Memory is that power in the soul which corresponds to this stored-up substance. Hence, when a good, healthy soul cannot attend good, religious meetings, or hear spiritual instruction, or have deep, spiritual reading, it has to live by memory on the stored-up nourishment which it has previously received.

You may ask, "Does not such a soul still have access to God in prayer?" I answer, Yes. Prayer is the very breath of the spiritual life, and breath is more essential to life than anything else; but as the body lives on three things—air, water, and food—so the soul lives on three things—namely, prayer, the Holy Spirit, and the periodical feeding on freshly-apprehended spiritual truth. And though the body can live a good while on air and water, yet, if denied food, it will die. In like manner the soul of the believer may live on prayer and the Holy Spirit, but if it is cut off from the understanding of appropriate spiritual truth, it will pine, and the life be greatly weakened. For this reason, the best of Christian people need the help of good, religious meetings, of Bible instruction, and of spiritual reading.

3. It is a law of all life to lay hold on foreign substances and turn them into itself. It is enough to make us stand in awe to watch the strange power which the life of even a little plant has. The roots of

every kind of plant or tree will seize upon the same gases and juices in the earth and transmute them into their several lives. The oak turns everything into oak, and out of the same substances the deadly nightshade turns everything into nightshade. The lamb converts the grass into lamb, and from the identical same substances the wild ass builds up his life. The omnipotent mechanism that intervenes between the one result and the other is simply a difference in the kind of life. This law holds true in the spiritual life. The soul in which Satan reigns turns everything it eats into selfishness, and the soul which has been washed in Jesus' blood and filled with the Christ-life will convert all that it eats into the Christ-life. The same trials, bereavements, losses, and sorrows which make one kind of life grow in fretting or melancholy, or bitter and open rebellion, will make another kind of life grow in meekness and patient perseverance, and an inexpressible charity and sweetness of spirit. Everything depends on whether the self-life or the Christ-life has possession of us. There is a point in the Christian life where the whole being is so crucified and pervaded by the Holy Spirit, in spirit, soul, and body, that everything it comes in contact with, and every experience of joy and sorrow, and every treatment it receives from men or devils, becomes a means of grace, and is turned into a mystical nourishment. There is such a thing as feeding on odors and outward bathings

of milk and oil. It has been found that hungry persons get nourished by the smell of cooked food. Some winters ago the poor, hungry tramps in Chicago used to hang around the restaurants in such crowds that the police drove them away. Many of them testified that they desired to smell the odor of the cooked food, as it seemed to appease their hunger.

There is something analogous to this in the spiritual life. To a hungry soul there is an indescribable flavor and a mystical nourishment in good, spiritual singing, in being in the presence of good people, and even in looking in the face of a Spirit-filled person. A Christ-possessed soul has a mysterious, heavenly atmosphere around it, and this very atmosphere is electrified with a heavenly vigor.

The inner spirit of a perfect believer gets a nourishment out of the odors of Paradise ; out of the majestic beauties of nature ; out of the tender memories of the past ; out of the flights of pure poetry ; out of dreams and bright mental visions ; out of storms and tempests, as sea-birds feed on the foam which the tempest churns out from the sea ; out of the affinities of friendship ; and even out of the antagonism of foes.

Oh, blessed be God for that all-devouring vortex of love which grinds grist from life or death, from nature, grace, or glory, into that fine flour out of which angels' food is cooked ! A soul in such a state will not only find food for itself out of every opening flower of

grace and providence, but it will be a food-bearer to other hungry souls.

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## II.

## A DEEPER DEATH TO SELF.

THERE is not only a death to sin, but in a great many things there is a deeper death to self—a crucifixion in detail, and in the minutia of life—after the soul has been sanctified. This deeper crucifixion to self is the unfolding and application of all the principles of self-renunciation which the soul agreed to in its full consecration. Job was a perfect man, and dead to all sin; but in his great sufferings, he died to his own religious life; died to his domestic affections; died to his theology; all his views of God's providence; he died to a great many things which in themselves were not sin, but which hindered his largest union with God. Peter, after being sanctified and filled with the Spirit, needed a special vision from heaven to kill him to his traditional theology and Jewish high churchism. The very largest degrees of self-renunciation, crucifixion, and abandonment to God, take place after the work of heart-purity. There are a multitude of things which are not sinful; nevertheless, our attachment to them prevents our greatest fulness of the Holy Spirit and our amplest co-operation with God. Infinite wisdom takes us in hand, and arranges to lead us through deep,



interior crucifixion to our fine parts, our lofty reason, our brightest hopes, our cherished affections, our religious views, our dearest friendship, our pious zeal, our spiritual impetuosity, our narrow culture, our creeds and churchism, our success, our religious experiences, our spiritual comforts ; the crucifixion goes on till we are dead and detached from all creatures, all saints, all thoughts, all hopes, all plans, all tender heart-yearnings, all preferences ; dead to all troubles, all sorrows, all disappointments ; equally dead to all praise or blame, success or failure, comforts or annoyances ; dead to all climates and nationalities ; dead to all desire but for Himself. There are innumerable degrees of interior crucifixion on these various lines. Perhaps not one sanctified person in ten thousand ever reaches that degree of death to self that Paul and Madame Guyon, and similar saints, have reached.

In contradistinction from heart-cleansing, this finer crucifixion of self is gradual ; it extends through months or years : the interior spirit is mortified over and over on the same points, till it reaches a state of divine indifference to it. A great host of believers have obtained heart-purity, and yet, for a long time, have gone through all sorts of “ dying daily ” to self, before they found that calm, fixed union with the Holy Ghost which is the deep longing of the child of God. Again, in contradistinction from heart-cleansing, which is by faith, this deeper death to self is by suffering.



This is abundantly taught in Scripture, and confirmed by the furnace experience of thousands. Joseph was a sanctified man before being cast into prison; but there the iron entered into his soul (see Ps. 105, 18 margin), and by suffering he reached the highest death of self. There are literally scores of Scripture passages, like Ps. 71: 19-21, teaching that the upper ranges in the sanctified state are wrought out through suffering. Perhaps the most remarkable passage of the Word on this subject is in Romans, fifth chapter; the first verse teaches justification by faith, the second verse teaches full salvation by faith, and verses three to five teach a deeper death and fuller Holy Ghost life by tribulation. When the soul undergoes this deeper death of self, it enters into a great wideness of spiritual comprehension and love; a state of almost uninterrupted prayer; of boundless charity for all people; of unutterable tenderness and broadness of sympathy; of deep, quiet thoughtfulness; of extreme simplicity of life and manners; and of deep visions into God and the coming ages. In this state of utter death to self, suffering, sorrows, pains, and mortifications of all kind are looked upon with a calm, sweet indifference. Such a soul looks back over its heart-breaking trials, its scalding tears, its mysterious tribulations, with gentle subduedness, without regret, for it now sees God in every step of the way. Into such a soul the Holy Spirit pours the ocean currents of His own life; its great work

henceforth is to watch the monitions and movements of the Spirit within it, and yield prompt, loving, unquestioning co-operation with Him. Such a soul has at last, in deed and in truth, reached the place where there is "none of self and all of Christ."

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### III.

#### LOADED WORDS.

THERE is an indescribable quality about words, even when they are printed, but more so when they are spoken. Words are chariots in which the quality of the heart and mind ride forth to other souls. The dominant heart-quality of a person will possess and accompany his words with absolute precision. If the spirit of a man is superficial, or narrow, or time-serving, or selfish, or trifling, these qualities will pervade his words, in spite of all the seriousness or sanctity he may try to put into them, whether they are written or spoken. If the heart is large and filled with the broad, tender love of Jesus, and compassion for others, then the simplest expressions, which may seem common-place, will be freighted with these qualities. All words are loaded with the quality of the soul out of which they proceed. It is eternally impossible for God to utter one word that is not loaded with divinity; and, on the other hand, it is impossible for the devil to utter one word which does not, in some

way, contain a lie. Words are like eyes. Some eyes are inquisitive ; others are pleading ; others are brave ; others are searching ; others are mild and tender ; and still others are low and mean. There is an invisible stream of soul-quality that flows out from people's eyes, and there is no way in the world to change the quality of that stream except by changing the eye, and the only way to change the eye is to change the immortal spirit that looks out through the eye.

This same thing is true of words. Our words are the eye-balls of the heart, in which others see the quality of our minds. The apostle speaks of "our words being seasoned with salt ;" and Jesus tells us that we must "have salt in ourselves." In one sense, salt is sweeter than sugar, and far more essential to the chemistry of our blood than sugar is. Hence, salt is a type of the indwelling Christ in us ; and it is when we are salted through and through with the blessed Holy Ghost that our words will be seasoned with the real Christ-life. Our words cannot be loaded with the Holy Spirit after they leave our lips. If God is in them, they must proceed out of a Holy Spirit element in us. The drops of blood, or the tears, that you may shed, all contain salt ; but that salt is in the stomach and the heart before it is in the blood-drops or the tear-drops. In like manner, if our words have a savor of life and power in them, they must get that quality from the inner depths of our spirit before they

drop from our lips or our pens. Jesus teaches that our words reveal our heart-character, and says : " By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." If we speak or write in the Holy Spirit, our words will be loaded with light. There will be a transparency and straightforward simplicity in them like unto clear glass. They will not be spoken for ostentation, or for sound, or in guile, or with double meaning. All such words are opaque.

Many a sermon is so preached, and many a religious book so written, that instead of revealing the truth to the simplest understanding, it obscures it. The only use of words is to make the thought easily and perfectly intelligible, and when the Holy Spirit inspires them, they are like balls of clear glass, in which the very core of the thought can be seen and comprehended. Another peculiarity about words loaded with the Spirit is an inexpressible warmth and magnetism in them. They seem to quiver with a heavenly electricity ; they vitalize the mind ; they penetrate the understanding ; there is a love-quality in them, like the pungent, penetrating heat of sweet spices and aromatic oils. A piece of cedar-wood or sandal-wood will give forth a sweet, pungent odor for hundreds of years ; and so there is a hot, burning flavor in the words which have come from minds aflame with divine love. It often happens that persons devoid of the interior flame of the Holy Ghost try to put a pathos or an

unction into their prayers or sermons or conversation ; but in spite of all their efforts, their words are insipid, milk and water, chilly and powerless, because they have not come from an interior furnace. It is only a painted fire, which dazzles the eye and freezes the hearer. The Holy Spirit alone can put into our words that burning, warming sensation which kindles other souls into fervor. Only notice, when some person speaks in a religious meeting under the melting, burning love of Jesus, how their words strike the mind like a warm south wind in early spring ; notice how the congregation listen to catch every word ; how the fiery stream of speech will evoke a pleasant smile, or a flowing tear, or awaken conviction, or a sense of joy ; every mind in the congregation which loves the truth will be wide awake ; there is a warmth in the expression of the people's eyes, and if you could see into their intellects, it would resemble a flower-garden blossoming into bright and glowing thoughts, and their affections melted into sweetness. Those burning words are being shot like red-hot bullets from a divine magazine of a fire-baptized heart. In comparison with such words, all human eloquence is like cold moonbeams on a frozen sea.

Another characteristic of Holy Ghost loaded words is a divine fitness in them as to time and place and matter. God often arranges to have His Spirit-led children speak words in such a juncture of circum-

stances, or at such times, and in such a tone of voice, as the speaker did not premeditate, which have accomplished vast and everlasting results. People will often say that you spoke a certain word to me years ago, under such and such circumstances, which made a great change in my life. Here is a young lady physician who has packed her trunk to leave a certain camp-meeting. She is invited to lead a young people's meeting. An evangelist standing by, in an unpremeditated way, simply says: "Sister, the Lord wants you here; go, unpack your trunk, and lead that meeting." The words are loaded; they pierce the heart. The young lady leads the meeting, and from that time on becomes a holiness evangelist.

A certain man is holding a meeting in North Georgia. A brother steps up and says: "I met you ten years ago in Augusta, when I was seeking sanctification, and walking in the street, I asked you several questions. You simply answered me: 'Brother, just leave yourself in the hands of Jesus, and He will answer all your questions.' Your words were loaded, and in a few moments I was in spiritual liberty."

There are millions of instances where words have been spoken, under the guidance of the Spirit, just in the nick of time to accomplish great results.

Another quality about loaded words is that of durability; they have in them the element of immortality.

Common-place words, spoken out of the mere creature, glide away from us by the million ; but certain words, appropriate to our needs and charged with the Spirit, bury themselves in our memories, and remain fresh with us through life.

Many years ago, I met an old negro, about a hundred years old. In his conversation, he said : "Man tell something you forgit ; God tell you something you no forgit." I have often thought of that expression. If we want our prayers, or sermons, or testimonies, or written words, to abide in everlasting fruitfulness, they must be in the order of Divine will and under the impulse of the Holy Spirit. Some persons try of set purpose to speak wise and appropriate and powerful words. But all such is a failure. You can't speak loaded words by trying to, or for the occasion ; it is only by having the very fountains of our being so melted and filled and united with the Holy Spirit that, without any premeditation or set purpose, every stray shot and our ordinary conversation will be just as full of holy gravity and fiery truth as our prayers and sermons. The power must be generic, and continually flowing through us from the indwelling Christ. A trifling preacher during the week cannot speak fiery and weighty words on Sunday. Let us in secret prayer bathe ourselves so long in the bright and warm presence of Jesus that when we go forth we shall unconsciously carry in our manners and words that in-



imitable quality of life and durability which can come alone from the Eternal One.

If in the past our words have been lacking in the Divine aroma of grace, let us go to the fountain and, by persevering prayer, get in such abiding relation with the real source of all holiness as to make our very words conductors of heavenly electricity. Our infinite, loving God will gladly utilize any little humble one on this earth as a channel of holy fire, if they will utterly yield themselves up to His will and the current of the Holy Spirit.

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#### IV.

### PERSONAL LOVE OF JESUS.

WE have a revelation of God's personal feelings in the very nature of the first great commandment, that we are to love Him with all our heart.

The complaint that Jesus had against the Church at Ephesus was their lack of fervent, personal love for Him ; they had " works " and " labor " and " patience," and great zeal in searching out heretics, and in bearing persecution and the scorn of their neighbors, and had not fainted under hardships.

If such a list of graces were now found in one person, he would be esteemed a great saint ; and yet the infinite Searcher of hearts saw the lack of something for which all these massive virtues could not atone ;



and that was a warm, deep, incessant, cleaving, tender passion of soul for the person of the Lord Jesus.

Very few Christians reach such an intimacy with our dear Lord as to receive and appreciate His individual feelings. Jesus is an infinite lover, and nothing will satisfy Him but a pure, sacred, passionate, and personal love. He loves to be loved. He loves those most who have the most personal affection for Him. There are so many things that are eminently religious, and brave, and enterprising, and reformatory, which display great zeal and orthodoxy, but which do not satisfy the longings of our Savior's heart.

There are so few Christians that are positively affectionate with Jesus. Personal love of Jesus is marked by several characteristics :

I. It is a unique and undefinable love for *His person* as the God-man. When we are filled with the Spirit, there will be unfolded in our minds a fixed apprehension of each person in the Godhead ; and there will be individual love for each person in the Godhead, and a sweet, peculiar adoration and affection and worship for the Father and for Christ, and for the Holy Spirit. And there is something in our love for each of the Divine persons which is peculiar to their personality. In such a state, our love for Jesus is the blending of love for the eternal Son and the sacred humanity, so this affection is composed of the most ardent attachments which a creature can have for

his God, and the strongest attachment which one creature can have for another.

The human soul and sacred body of Jesus are the highest of all things in the creation of God. His suffering and death render Him the most precious creature in the universe, both to Father and to us; and when this is joined with the eternal *Logos*, who was our Creator, it puts Him in such relation to us that we can love Him with a kind of love as we cannot have toward another person, either divine or human. It is this compound love, this blending of affections, like the composition of the sweet spikenard, which Jesus wants us to pour forth on Him.

We can love Jesus with more different kinds of affection than any other person in the universe. Look at the number of tender relationships that He sustains toward a soul that is perfectly wedded to Him by the Holy Spirit. As our Creator, we adore Him; as our Redeemer, we boundlessly trust Him; as our King, we obey Him; as our Judge, we fear Him; as our Master, we submit to Him; as our Savior, we praise Him; as a little Infant, we feel a fatherly and motherly love toward Him; as a Brother, we feel a brotherly and sisterly love for Him; as our spiritual Bridegroom, our hearts are passionately devoted to Him.

Every relation that He sustains to us calls forth a new form of love. There is no kind of affection

possible to the human soul which Jesus should not receive. See in how many ways Eve was related to Adam ; being builded out of his rib, she was his own daughter, and at the same time his own sister, and at the same time his bride ; and he being the lord of the human family, she was his servant, and all these relations entered into her affections for him.

Jesus is to us, in a similar way, all that Adam was to Eve, with a great deal more besides. Now do we love our precious Lord in all these relationships ! Is our love for Him an ever-flowing stream, which is made up from all these several rivulets ? There is no one in the universe, to a divinely-illuminated mind, so lovable as our blessed, Divine Jesus.

II. Personal love for Jesus has in it the extremes of the most sacred fear and the most child-like familiarity. Some people think that those who have much sacred fear can not have much love ; and, on the other hand, that those who have a fond familiarity of love can not have a reverential fear ; but such people are greatly mistaken. Fear and love are the two equal wings to this soaring devotion. Those who have an awe which in the least hinders their love, have a slave's awe, and not that of a child. There is nothing more beautiful in the interior life than that sacred awe, that sweet and sacred dread, which the soul feels in the presence of its Lord. When we gaze at His beautiful and blazing majesty, when our whole soul feels a gentle

trembling before Him, there is something in the very holy dread that draws us to a deeper and more tender love.

And, on the other hand, there is a spotless familiarity which the soul can take with Jesus—a boldness and liberty of thought and speech—which only serves to make our worship more true, so that, in reality, sacred fear and familiar love act and react on each other.

III. Personal love of Jesus is indicated by an extreme sensitiveness for His honor. The soul feels an insult at every dishonor that is shown to its Divine Husband. When Jesus is wounded, His name lightly used, His majesty disregarded, His precious blood ignored—when He is treated irreverently, or when He is in any way dishonored as to His person or merits or claims—this hot personal love will feel a delicate, divine indignation.

The heart is as sensitive to the preciousness and honor of Christ as the apple of the eye. The truly wedded soul is very touchy as to the glory of its husband. And, on the other hand, this kind of love is always elated and happy at every advancement of Christ's glory. It loves to see Him extended; it glories in the spread of His glory.

IV. This kind of love has an incessant yearning for all the dispositions manifested in the life of Jesus. This personal love of Jesus has large, bright eyes, and from the New Testament records it can see marvelous

things in the Christ-life. It has vast and penetrating visions into the depths of His lowliness, the vastness of His charity, the tenderness of His Spirit, the perpetual self-sacrifice of His will, the absolute courage of His obedience, the everlastingness of His kindness. It sees His whole inner life, like a magnificent city, all lit up with unspeakable attributes, and all bespangled with majesties and virtues and graces and sweetnesses, that charm and bewilder the soul, and make it leap with intensest desire to possess everything which it sees in its lovely Lord. No splendor in creation can compare with the dazzling charms which an ardently loving soul perceives in Jesus. It cries out, with St. Paul, "Oh, the depth of the riches!" It is this vision which makes the soul pine and pray, and weep loving tears, and dream over and over of the ineffable transformation of being made just like its heavenly Bridegroom.

V. This form of love is strongly attached to the possessions of Christ. There is a peculiar attachment which always goes with the possession of a thing. It is the affection of ownership. As soon as anything becomes our property, we have a peculiar attachment which never could exist previous to ownership. This is why Jesus said, "Where your possessions are, there will your heart be." He does not say the possessions will go where the heart is, but the heart will go where the possessions are. Hence the soul in perfect, loving

union with Jesus will find itself taking hold of all His personal kingdom and all His property, as a young queen finds the affections of her heart stretching out to all the subjects and enterprises of her king's dominion.

VI. I should not omit to say that this personal love for Jesus has in it a fond, caressing spirit for Him. It twines its thoughts around Him. It folds Him round and round with the delicate embraces of the Spirit. It often finds itself, like John, leaning on His breast ; or, like Mary, sitting at His feet ; or, like Magdalene, bathing His feet with tears ; and whatever posture the body may be in, the soul is often on its face before Him in perfect, penitential tenderness.

VII. The love of Jesus would not be complete if it did not include a longing for His personal appearing, and to see Him come in the glory of His kingdom. The Holy Spirit loves Jesus with an infinite love, and He alone can flood our being with fervent love for Christ ; and the Holy Ghost has told us that we are to "love Christ's appearing." St. Paul speaks of a crown of righteousness for all those who love our Lord's appearing. Any love for Jesus which does not include an intense desire to see and be with Him is below the standard of affection which He requires of us. They please Him most who love Him personally and ardently up to their capacity.

## V.

## LUKEWARMNESS.

THE very thought of lukewarmness implies that the soul has previously been in a good, hot state of grace. Persons who have never known a good degree of fervor, either in a justified or sanctified state, will never have the malady of lukewarmness. It is like pestilential insects, which attack thrifty, living vegetables, and not dry, dead sticks. We never think of a dry, rainless desert as suffering from a drouth. The very thought of suffering from drouth implies that the ground has previously been well watered.

It often happens that those who have been the most richly blessed with divine grace, and who have been lifted into fervent love, will imperceptibly decline into lukewarmness. Very few Christians on earth entirely escape this miserable tepidity altogether. One of the worst features about lukewarmness is that it steals on the soul in such quiet, respectable ways. If the horrible thing had horns and hoofs, and a smack of criminality in it, it would alarm the soul; but, as a rule, lukewarmness of spirit is so decent and well-behaved, that it chloroforms its victim and kills him without a scream of terror. This is what makes it so awfully fatal. While open sin slays its hundreds, nice, respectable lukewarmness slays its tens of thousands.

Could we get a vision of a soul that has been all



aglow with sanctifying grace, as it was beginning to get lukewarm, we would see a heart seemingly spotless and empty, with the heavenly dove and the good angels just on the outside, but with their faces turned away from it, as if about to leave; and, on the other hand, we would see unclean beasts and birds on the outside of the heart, but with their faces turned toward it, as if about to enter. We would see the eyes half closed, as if about taking a nap, and a dull, expressionless mouth, reminding us of a winter fireplace where the fire burns low. Oh, could the soul but see the awfulness of such a condition!

Lukewarmness is indicated by a negligence in acts of piety, and a carelessness in fixed habits of devotion; such as daily reading God's Word, regular seasons of prayer, constant guarding of our conversation, seasons of fasting, and habits of divine and heavenly meditation. There is not only a carelessness in the performing of these acts, but a dullness of spirit, a slovenness of mind, in the doing of them. As nearly all tight-rope walkers and lion-tamers sooner or later get killed in their foolish game by a little carelessness, so many Christians fall from elevated grace, and are devoured by lions, through a thoughtless and careless spirit in Christian duty.

Another symptom of lukewarmness is a trusting to the magic of former grace. The soul has experienced, by an instantaneous regeneration, or an instantaneous



sanctification, such floods of light and love as seem to sweep it out on an irresistible tide, and everything religious seems so easy, that everything works like a charm. But this very flood-tide of holy ease becomes a snare to the soul. It leans upon these instantaneous blessings to work by a sort of magic, and to take the place of patient, thoughtful perseverance. There are hundreds who are lazily expecting the mere blessing of sanctification to take them through, and do not perceive that the chilling frost is settling down in the edges of their souls. It is as if a captain of a fine ship, after getting her out to sea, with the sails all set, and fairly in the wind, should lash the helm, and tell the crew they might take a holiday, expecting the wind and the ship, the chart and the compass, to do the balance. There are more souls doing this thing than we dream of.

Another element in lukewarmness is a sort of indefinite contentment with the present level of the spiritual life. There is a quiet, unexpressed decision of the mind that the soul is getting on very well, and that it will settle down into its present thought and feelings. Most Christians have quietly decided to live the remainder of their days just about like they are now doing. They expect no further great epochs in their experience.

A great many holiness people are so afraid of what resembles a third blessing that they expect no great

widening deluges of the Spirit, but nestle down in the thought that if they can only keep a clean heart, they will never bother themselves about the ocean-depths of boundless, melting, fiery love. Such souls are already on the decline, and do not know it. Their spiritual life resembles a quiet, lazy, drowsy summer Sunday afternoon. They feel the Saturday night's work has been well done up; the Sabbath morn religion has been nicely attended to; and they can't bear the thought of the duties of Monday morning, and so spend the time napping. Even holiness preachers settle down into this Sunday afternoon condition, with just enough spiritual fervor to brush the summer flies away.

It is amazing how few Christians are seriously determined to get beyond their present experience; and of course they do not get beyond. And this lukewarmness manifests itself by a disposition to criticise as heretics those who do push beyond. The legalist suspicions the man as being erratic who knows his sins are forgiven. The merely converted man looks upon the fully sanctified with a good deal of suspicion, and even many who are sanctified regard any greater enlargements in the Holy Ghost life as bordering on heresy. And so it goes on. Will there ever be any end to the narrowness and the littleness of our minds and faith?

Another element in lukewarmness is the secret fact in the mind that the soul has done so much for God,

has fought so many battles, endured so many afflictions, had so many uplifts in grace, that it can put itself on the retired list of the army and draw full pay. This is a very subtle disposition, and the soul hardly dares to whisper it to itself, for the conscience feels that its meanness is like the gunpowder plot, which must not be breathed : and yet, where is the saint who has known much of God, into whose mind this low, sneaking thought has not crept? God only knows how many of His children, once hot with holy love, are living, like broken-down aristocracy, on the faded splendors of the past. Their experiences resemble faded photographs, or the withered flowers that were used at last week's funeral.

Another feature in lukewarmness is the hidden compliment which the soul takes to itself, that glowing fervor is only a juvenile thing which it has outgrown, and that it is now "serving God on principle." All states of toning down in spiritual life are accompanied by some sort of self-complacency. When the soul begins to think less of God, and of the precious blood, and of the Holy Ghost, it begins to think more of itself.

This thought of serving God on cold principle indicates a sad state : it may not be ruinous to one's life, but it is ruinous to deep spirituality. One of the worst things about it is its respectability. It keeps in the beaten path of decent religion ; no one can lay any

charge against it ; it can pass in and out around any circle of Christians ; it does nothing to call down severe rebukes ; it is an old, sober, well-behaved thing, keeping on good terms with everybody and everything in general. If only something terrific would happen to it ; if it could be hurled to the dust in humiliation and mortification ; if it could only be set weeping and wailing, it would be an infinite advantage to it. But such a miserable state of soul is so pleasing to the devil that he will not even tempt it to commit any great sin, lest it should be shocked into renewed repentance and fervor of grace. The devil likes to bury a hot religious experience in a smooth shroud of cold virtue.

There is one more symptom of lukewarmness, and that is a dull sense of inward breaking with God. The heart feels that something is not just right. The orthodoxy is all right ; the outward life may be correct ; the verbal testimony still kept up ; and all Christian duties in a general way looked after ; but the animating spirit is weakened. There is no conscious touch from God ; no sense of fulness dilating the heart ; no sweet vision of God's attributes ; no bright, far-away fields open to it in secret prayer ; no lowly feeling of kissing the Savior's feet ; no rapt adoration of His majesty ; no sweet hymns vibrating in the mind during the sleep ; no melting, yearning love for the saving of souls ; no spells of divine laughter rippling through the mind ; no bullet-like piercing of the words

of the Scripture ; no whispering of the Holy Ghost as of old ; no conscious grasp on the throne through prayer.

The flash has left the eye ; the smile from the lip ; the divine throb from the heart ; the promptness has left the will ; the gentleness has left the voice ; the third heavens, with its retinue, have gone off somewhere. Some unpleasant, undefinable, unexplorable something has settled on the inner spirit ; it has ceased to feel toward Jesus as a real lover ; it is getting offensive to the Holy Spirit ; and unless something can be done to rekindle its fading fires, it will nauseate the Infinite heart, and Christ will spew it out of His mouth. This is an awful metaphor, and indicates the awfulness of lukewarmness.

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## VI.

### FEEDING OUR FAITH.

**I**NASMUCH as faith is the condition of all the spiritual life, of the entrance into that life, and the steps to progress in that life, it behooves us to give it all the nourishment possible. Faith can be strengthened, and fed, and thus will grow ; but the growth of faith is often very opposite to our notions concerning it. We often suppose that faith is made strong by receiving great encouragement, by having quick and abundant answers to prayer, by high states of joy, by lofty vis-

ions of divine things ; but in reality these things do not strengthen our faith as much as we fancy. Our faith is to be nourished on the promises of God. Those promises are contained in His written Word. They may be also promises communicated to the soul by the Holy Spirit, or through other souls who are in close fellowship with God, and who may speak to us great promises of what God has told them concerning us. When God first called Abraham, He inundated his soul with a sea of promises ; He spoke to him from the starry heavens, and from the soil of Canaan on which he walked, and by the visits of angels, and by the Holy Ghost in the deep of his nature. Abraham saw great fields of light—great possibilities of things for himself and his posterity. His soul drank in these promises, until his faith became wide and powerful, even before any of them were fulfilled. God deals with souls in a similar way ; yet when He calls any one to great degrees of perfection or of usefulness, He begins by opening up to them the promises of His Word, and the possibilities which they may achieve, even before there are any outward symptoms of their fulfillment. The heart that anchors itself in the promises of God, until those promises become as real as God himself, will have strong faith.

Another nourishment to faith is the removing from the soul of natural and human props. Naturally we lean on a great many things in nature, and society, and

the Church, and friends, more than we are aware of. We think we depend on God alone, and never dream of how much we depend on other things, until they are taken from us, and if they were not removed, we should go on, self-deceived, thinking that we relied on God for all things. But God designs to concentrate our faith in Him alone by removing all other foundations, and, one step after another, detaching us from all other supports. There are many souls which can not endure this utter desolation of secondary supports, which would be more than they could bear, and they would react into open rebellion ; so God allows them to have a junior faith, and to lean on other things more or less. But to those who are able to undergo the strain of faith, He allows all sorts of disappointments—the death of bright hopes, the removing of earthly friendships or destruction of property, the multiplied infirmities of the body and mind, the misunderstanding of dear ones, until the landscape of religious life seems swept with a blizzard, to compel the soul to house itself in God alone.

At the time the soul is having all secondary support removed, it does not perceive what is taking place within itself, but afterwards it finds that faith has been growing and expanding with every wave that has beat against it. Faith grows when we least expect it ; storms and difficulties, temptations and conflicts, are its field of operation ; like the stormy petrel on the ocean,



faith has a supernatural glee in the howling of the storm and the dash of the spray.

Faith not only is nourished by the removal of earthly props, but by the seeming removal of divine consolation. Our answer to prayer seems too long delayed, and faith is tested to its uttermost, when it seems as if the Lord has turned against us and all we can do is to continue holding on, with the pitiful cry of "Lord, help me!" Even then faith is expanding and growing beyond all we are aware of, by the very extension of the delay of the answer. The longer the Lord delayed in answering the prayer of the woman of Syrophœnicia, the more her faith became purified and intense. Long delays serve to purify our faith, till everything that is spasmodic and ephemeral and whimsical is purged out of it, and nothing is left to it except faith alone.

Another nourishment to faith is to get before the mind the great faith of other people—to read the lives of those who have been sorely tried, and who have believed God against all odds. Faith kindles faith; by understanding how God has dealt with other souls enables us to interpret His dealings with us. Our faith is inspired by reading the trials of the Bible saints more than by reading the pleasant and easy things.

Another nourishment to faith is that mode of dealing with us by which the Lord is constantly changing the providential channels through which He sends



blessings to us. If God's blessings flow on us in a certain way, for any length of time, we unconsciously fix our trust on the way the benefactions come, more than on the invisible fountain. If the Lord gave the Jews water in the wilderness, sometimes it was from the rock, and sometimes it was from a well dug in the dry sand. (See Num. 21: 16-18.) When God sends us great spiritual refreshings, He will change the circumstances under which they come ; when He sends temporal blessings in answer to prayer, He will change the channels through which they flow. He does not want us to become attached to any mode or phenomenon. He wants our faith perfectly united to Himself, and not to *His mode of doing things*, and hence He will disappoint us on the old lines of expectation, and reveal His favors from a new quarter, in a new way, and surprise us with some great and sweet device of His infinite wisdom. And thus our faith is strengthened by disappointment, until it reaches such perfect union with God that it never looks to any body, or any thing, or any mode, or any old channel, or any circumstances, or any frame of mind, or any meeting, or any set of feelings, or at any time or season ; but keeps itself swung free from all these things, and dependent on God alone. This degree of faith can never be disappointed, can never be jostled, because it expects nothing except what God wills, and looks to no mode except infinite wisdom. Its expectation is from God only.

## VII.

## THE BENEFIT OF DEEP CRUCIFIXION.

THE word crucifixion, as it applies to us in a Christian sense, may be defined as any pain or suffering which renders us dead to sin or to self, or to the things of time and sense. There may be many kinds of sorrow and suffering which do not serve the purpose of true crucifixion.

In order that suffering may be a thorough mortification to us, it must be put in the will of God, and yielded to the operation of the Holy Spirit. When we yield ourselves absolutely up to God, and trust Him to take charge of every particle of our being and life and circumstances, it is then that His omnipotence takes gentle and firm possession of all our trials and sufferings, and makes them work a true crucifixion in us.

It does not matter what the occasion of the suffering may be. It may come from our own sins, or poverty, or ill-health, or loss of friends, or separations, or terrible and protracted temptations, or assaults of evil spirits, or the hatred of others, or great disappointment, or divine chastisements; it may come from many of these sources; but let it come from any cause in the universe, if we give it over entirely into the hands of God, and sink ourselves into His will, with a perfect desire for Him to work His best will in us, He will make every pain, every groan, every tear, every par-

ticle of our suffering, work in us a death to sin and to self, and to all things on earth which will be for our highest perfection and for His glory.

The depth and power of the spiritual life in every person depends exactly on the degree of their crucifixion. There is a divine mystery in suffering, a strange and supernatural power in it, which has never been fathomed by the human reason. There never has been known great saintliness of soul which did not pass through great suffering. There is such a thing as suffering reaching a state of perfection. When we suffer so severe and so long that we become dead to it, and divinely indifferent as to how much we suffer or how long it will continue ; when the suffering soul reaches a calm, sweet carelessness, when it can inwardly smile at its own suffering, and does not even ask God to deliver it from the suffering, then it has wrought its blessed ministry ; then patience has its perfect work ; then the crucifixion begins to weave itself into a crown.

It is in this state of the perfection of suffering that the Holy Spirit works many marvelous things in our souls. In such a condition, our whole being lies perfectly still under the hand of God ; every faculty of the mind and will and heart are at last subdued ; a quietness of eternity settles down into the whole being ; the tongue grows still, and has but few words to say ; it stops asking God questions ; it stops crying, " Why

hast thou forsaken me?'' the imagination stops building air-castles, or running off on foolish lines; the reason is tame and gentle; it stops debating, and quits all dogmatism; the will ceases from its own activity; the bluster and zeal of self-action is taken out of it; the choices are annihilated; it has no choice in anything but the purpose of God. The affections are weaned from all creatures and all things; it loves nothing but God and God's will in any given thing; it has no private ends to serve; it has no motives except to please God; it is so dead that nothing can hurt it, nothing can offend it, nothing can hinder it, nothing can get in its way; for, let its circumstances be what they may, it seeks only for God and His will, and it feels assured that God is making everything in the universe, good or bad, past or present, work together for its good. Oh, the blessedness of being absolutely conquered! of losing our own strength, and wisdom, and goodness, and plans, and desires, and being where every atom of our nature is like placid Galilee under the omnipotent feet of our Jesus.

Among great blessings resulting from sanctified suffering, is *that it gives a great wideness to the heart*, and a universality of love. This uttermost crucifixion destroys the littleness and narrowness of the mind; it gives an immensity to the sympathies, and an ocean-like divine love, which is beyond words. This is because creature-love is crucified, and divine love floods

the whole being. It is as if every drop of blood had been drawn out of the body, and the blood of a divine being had been poured into all the veins. The heart which has been perfectly crushed with suffering until it is dead to all its desires will be so inundated with divine charity that it will stretch itself out, and wrap the world round with fold on fold of boundless, spotless, impartial love for every creature that God has made. This immensity of heart loves all nations alike ; it is absolutely free from all bigotry, or caste, or natural prejudice, or political partisanship, or sectarian feeling. It is emphatically a citizen of heaven ; it takes as much interest in the kingdom of God in one place as another ; it feels as much interest in souls being saved in one denomination or one country as in another. This may seem strong meat, and many Christians will disagree with these words, but when they reach this condition, they will find the foregoing words perfectly true to their experience. When we reach the deepest death of self, we love all creatures with God's love, and as God loves them, up to our measure ; it is not so much we that love others, as it is that God loves them through us. We become the channels through which the Holy Spirit flows ; He pours His thoughts through our minds, His prayers and loves through our hearts, His choices through our wills. He breaks away all the banks and boundaries of our narrow education, or creed, or theology, or nationality, or

race, and takes us up into the boundlessness of His own life and feelings.

Another great benefit of perfect suffering, *is an inexpressible tenderness*. It is the very tenderness of Jesus filling the thoughts, the feelings, the manners, the words, the tones of the voice. The whole being is soaked in a sea of gentleness. Everything hard, bitter, severe, critical, flinty, has been crushed into powder. Great sufferers are noted for their quiet gentleness. As we approach them, it is like going to a tropical climate in mid-winter; the very air around them seems mellow; their slow, quiet words are like the gentle ripple of summer seas on the sand; their soft, pathetic eyes put a hush upon our rudeness or loudness of voice. There are many souls who are earnest Christians—nay, many who are sanctified—who have an indescribable something in them which needs the crushing and melting of some great crucifixion. Their tongues rattle so much, their spirit is dictatorial or harsh, they measure other people by themselves; there is something in their constitution which seems to need the grinding into fine flour. It is well worth the crushing of hearts with an overwhelming sorrow, if thereby God can bring us out into that beautiful tenderness and sweetness of spirit which is the very atmosphere of heaven. This kind of tenderness cannot be voluntarily put on; it cannot come from training; neither is it a transitory sweetness,

which is like a spring day intruding itself into winter ; but it is that fixed and all-pervading gentleness of spirit which is like the fixed climate of the Torrid zone. It is the finest outgrowth of perfect suffering.

Another benefit of complete crucifixion is *the detachment from all earthly things* which it produces. The mind has a thousand-fold attachment to the things in this world, which it is not aware of until they are ground to pieces by suffering. Did you ever notice how your soul stretches itself out into ten thousand things of earth and time, and how the fingers of your thoughts grasp thousands of things ! Just look at your mind ; for every friend you have on earth, there is a distinct attachment ; for every piece of property you own on earth, there is a distinct attachment ; for the ten thousand recollections in your by-gone life, there is a particular sentiment or attachment ; for all the scenes of earth and associations of time, there is an attachment ; and besides all these outward things, look at that vast, invisible world within your own self—your own desires, and hopes, and dreams, and prospects, and gratifications for your self, your family, your Church, your nation, your particular party ; see how you have become attached to your own thoughts, until your heart seems to have a million springs to it which flow round and round countless objects in this world !

I am not speaking of things positively wicked ; I am not speaking of things which are stigmatized as



sinful ; but of those things which Christian people recognize as innocent, and yet, in a thousand ways, they fetter the heart and bind it to earth. Perfect suffering will untie the heart, and gently loosen every cord that binds us to our foes or friends—to all our possessions ; to all the things of the past ; to all attractive sights and sounds—and give us such perfect inward liberty from everything on earth that the things of heaven can flow down into us, until we feel that we are citizens of the New Jerusalem a hundred times more powerfully than that we are the citizens of any earthly city or country. We feel deep in our hearts that, like St. Paul, we have already “ come to an innumerable company of angels, and the Church of the first-born, and the spirits of just men made perfect.” The coming of the Lord is so real to us, our whole being is pervaded with the sweet, attractive powers of the world to come. Like the detached balloon, we float toward the supernatural. The heavenly world comes into us exactly in proportion as all the affairs of earth are emptied out of us, and nothing so perfectly empties us and detaches us as perfect suffering. It is in this way that God makes our perfect crucifixion our crown of unfading joy.



## VIII.

## FRETTING OVER OURSELVES.

THERE are two extremes of feeling with regard to ourselves ; one is the feeling of self-complacency, and the other is the feeling of self-abhorrence ; and between these two extremes there are any number of feelings with regard to ourselves in which these two sentiments may be more or less blended. When we begin in thorough earnestness to follow Christ, with a definite view of being made like Him, it will necessarily make us meditate a good deal on Jesus. The more we apprehend of Christ, His nature and disposition, the more we see the infinite disparity between Him and ourselves ; and when at times we get a full view of ourselves, there seems to be so many things in us that are incorrigible that we are tempted to despair of ever becoming like Christ. There is a good way and a bad way of grieving over our frailties. It is the policy of Satan, if he can not fill us with self-conceit and self-complacency, to try the opposite policy of making us fret over ourselves.

There are various causes which lead devoted souls to chafe over their imperfections. One cause is that, by a subtle self-love, the soul desires to be good and fair and grand in its own eyes ; it would love to look into the mirror of God's law, and behold its reflection without a flaw, with the same sentiment that a hand-

some woman loves to behold the reflection of her beauty. This spirit of gloating over the beauty and symmetry of one's moral character is often alluded to in the Scriptures. The Lord says of such an one : "Thine heart was lifted up ; because of thy beauty thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy appearance ; I will bring thee to the ground" (Ezek. 28: 17).

God watches the finest motives and intents of the heart, and if we desire great degrees of perfection for our own admiration, God will allow great trials and weaknesses to mortify us to all refined self-admiration.

Another reason why devoted souls fret over themselves is the failure to fully appreciate the most infinite meanness and blindness and deceitfulness of our human nature. There are capabilities of sin, and all sorts of unlovely things in our nature, which we have never dreamed of. Just to the extent that we see the ever-widening, deepening glory and beauty of Jesus, we see the opposite in ourselves.

When souls first begin in the way of perfection, they think their defects are very few and very shallow ; and after months and years of walking with God, even though their hearts have been cleansed from sin, they discover certain defects and infirmities still adhering to them, which they thought would never annoy them beyond their first fervors of love. They find irresolution in the will, and dullness in the faculties and slug-

gishness in their nature ; such a lack of heavenly cheerfulness, promptness, warm-heartedness ; many narrow thoughts ; such a liability to be agitated and jostled by simple trifles of the day ; such a facility of forgetting lessons we have already learned ; such babyishness, and faintness, and pusillanimity of spirit, as we never expected would cling to us. Perhaps we never can see the infinite extent of the fall of man ; it may be we shall to eternity be deploring it.

Could we, from the beginning, see into all the unsounded depths and crevices and hidden caves of our souls, and comprehend the greatness of the reality of full restoration to God, we might more perfectly be prepared to bear patiently with ourselves. There is the subtle desire to seem good in the eyes of others, for the sake of being glorious ; most devoted souls have lofty ideals which they endeavor to reach. I knew a very pious woman, very refined and beautiful in her life and manners. When she was seeking sanctification, she had an intense desire to be a model of a minister's wife ; she had a lofty and beautiful ideal in her mind. But in after years, passing through great trials and afflictions and humiliations, she found that her petty ideal was broken over and over again, at least in her own estimation. The Spirit will not allow us to fill the phantom of the ideal. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, and when we lie in self-abhorrence at Jesus' feet, with all our religious ideals shat-

tered to fragments, He sees His ideal being carried out in us. Fretting over ourselves is a very subtle sort of self-righteousness. Self-upbraiding and calling ourselves hard names may seem like humility, but in reality it is spiritual pride.

The true medicine for our defects is a deep, quiet, patient hatred of self, which is very calm and peaceful. Any view of our faults which disturbs our quiet repose in Jesus is a wrong view.

God sees our infirmities infinitely beyond what we do ; He pours over us an unceasing stream of patient love, in which there is no upbraiding, nor severity ; and whatever breaks our quietness of spirit, our firm rest in God, is of the evil one.

I have heard of family feuds, where people hated their enemies with such a settled and life-long hatred that the very name of the enemy was never mentioned, and no allusion made to him. This illustrates, in some sort, the calm, settled hatred we are to have for self. It is to be so fixed and so deep that we shall ignore self in everything, and keep our minds on the things of God, and when we see our defects, quietly leave them with Jesus, without being discouraged or agitated. Think how soon the conflict will be over, the trials all past ! think of the long, bright years in heaven ! think of the time when every pain and mortification of this life will be forgotten in the sea of ecstasy, or else remembered only as a cause of praise !

The best death to self is to be where we can see everything mean and ugly and disagreeable in our lives, or in our composition, and look at it with quietness and sweetness, and a loving self-aborrence which glows with fervor to Jesus, and at the same time does not chafe nor murmur with ourselves.

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## IX.

## LITTLE THINGS.

IN the kingdom of God, which is exactly opposite to the kingdom of this world, things rank by the greatness of quality, and not by that of quantity. Our God proves His Divinity by the notice and emphasis He puts on small things. "Despise not the day of small things." "Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."

There is no better way in the world to test every trait in a soul than by little things. Every Christian duty, every grace of the Spirit, every privilege of life, is being proved and manifested to the eyes of God and angels in things so small that we seldom take thought of them. It is the unpremeditated and instinctive actions and words that reveal the reality of what is in us, and not those large, conspicuous things for which we especially arm ourselves. The most essential grace for a human being is *humility*; God appreciates a soul

in proportion to the depth of its humility more than all other things combined ; but this very grace of lowliness of heart finds its appropriate home in small things. The sweetest things in the world—the best prayers, the poorest self-denial, the tenderest words of sympathy—by a delicate instinct of the Holy Spirit, hide themselves in little secret ways, as the turtle-dove will build its nest in un-thought-of, lowly places on the ground. There are some great sorrows and sufferings that can be written out in history for the world to see ; but the greater martyrs are those who have thousands of agonies in small and hid-away matters seen only by the Infinite eye. To suffer with a patient heart in things so common and small that people never think of noticing them is to glorify God in a high degree ; for if we suffer in ways so concealed that no eyes but His can see it, then surely it is to please Him only. Fanatics and self-made martyrs like to show their sufferings to notice on a large scale, as a dog will make a loud howl over a small hurt ; but a real lowly soul will suffer a hundred-fold more in silence and little things without advertising it, as the lamb will endure a great wound in silence.

There are times and places for great events and things, but in matters pertaining to perfect Christ-likeness of Spirit, the very greatness and splendor of large things hide God, and the creature is manifested more than the Lord. But in little things God has an op-

portunity to show Himself ; He is not smothered under so much magnitude and glitter, as electricity can show itself better at a small focus than by being spread over an immense cloud. There is no intrinsic harm in things being great, but we are so foolish we let the greatness of things detract us from God. Just in the same proportion that all human things grow in size, they lose the power of God. Great men, great learning, great Churches, great sermons and fine music, great camp-meetings, even great holiness organizations—anything great in the creatures—soon absorbs so much attention that the sensitive Holy Ghost finds Himself slighted, and quietly hunts up little people and little opportunities, where God alone can get the glory. In every age of the world, the Holy Spirit has been traveling away from big things into the small, in order to find places where God alone shall be exalted. If we could always remain broken and contrite and little, God would always show Himself to us, and reveal His personal presence in the insignificant things of daily life, and the Holy Ghost would work marvelously through us in sweet and quiet ways, utterly incredible to the great and wise ones. God alone knows when we are really little. Many will proclaim that they feel their utter nothingness, but in one hour after can not peacefully and lovingly endure to be contradicted, or reproved, or slighted, or slandered. What we are in the sight of God, that we are, no more and no less, regard-



less of what men or saints or angels think of us, and regardless of what we think of ourselves. The Holy Ghost knows when we are little, and His abiding and wondrous revealings will continue just so long as our infantile littleness continues.

In regard to our work, there is more real holy labor in the small than in great things ; for just see, in any great work there is human sympathy, man's praises, a field for enthusiasm and renown, a sphere for the display of gifts and zeal, and motives to arouse the natural heart ; but in a little work wrought in obscurity, all these high things are weeded out. I do not say that a great work may not be done purely for God alone, but it furnishes a field for so much of human ; but in the hid-away and shut-in ways of life, our God gives us a walled-in garden to sow down with deeds and words and manners and looks, out of a loving, tender spirit, with no incentive but love, and no purpose but to please Him. A little work done only for God to know has in it a heavenly courage, a purity of intention, a sweetness of love, which is very difficult to put in a notable act.

We can show more self-sacrifice in little things than we can in great ; because the occasions are more multiplied and the temptations to self-indulgence are greater. On the other hand, we should not be in scrupulous bondage to little things, for if we overmagnify little things, we put our souls in slavery, and



the devil turns our flower-garden into a prison. Little things should serve two purposes for us—to see how much of God's guidance and presence we can find in them, and to see how much of Jesus-like love and service we can put in them. Every religious thing on earth will take rank in heaven just according to how much Christ is in it.

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## X.

## SIMPLICITY.

GOD'S best gifts are the simplest, such as air and light and water and bread. So, in religion, the greatest things are unmixed love, pure humility, fixed obedience, a single eye to please God. A sunbeam refracted gives seven colors; that is complexity, which is the opposite of simplicity. The simple white light is infinitely more blessed and useful than the complex, colored rainbow. To be fond of complex things indicates childishness of taste. Complexity in religious life bespeaks a baby condition of moral nature. The more pure and advanced the mind is, the more it admires perfect simplicity in every thing. Simplicity in the Christian life is the state of perfect transparency, unbiasedness; no mixedness in the desires or tempers or affections; oneness of motive, oneness of intention, where the conscience, desires, and will all flow one way in sweet agreement; where faith and hope and love

exist without being mixed with their opposites of doubt and fear and hate.

But no definition of spiritual simplicity will satisfy the heart. The Holy Spirit, who is the God of simplicity, must reveal it to the eye of the soul. When the blessed Spirit softly unveils to all our inner perceptions, the perfect simplicity of the Christ-life, the unmixedness, the unsullied transparency of God's Word and His inner kingdom, there is a holy charm and a sweet satisfaction to the mind beyond the expression of words. When all doubleness and tangled complexity of every sort is purged out of us, and when the Holy Spirit floods all our inner being with the very same simplicity that is in Jesus, how it makes us love simplicity in everybody and in everything! We then have a keen appreciation of simplicity in character, manners, dress, speech, worship, business. Anything extravagant, grand, pompous, puffy, stilted, far-fetched, loud, slangy, odd, smart, brilliant, or confused or complex, in experience, life, or expression, becomes very offensive. The soul that is living in sweet oneness with Jesus will intuitively detect and recoil from everything that is mystical, shady, tricky, or complicated. Such a soul abominates the secret lodges, the tricks of trade, the keeping up of appearances, or anything subtle or selfish; it deals only with what is open, straightforward, and translucent. A person may have intellectual simplicity, which is the characteristic of all great

minds, and yet, if he is not purified by the Holy Ghost, he will still be lacking in simplicity of moral nature. A person whose heart is rendered perfectly simple by the full indwelling of Christ will be inundated with simplicity in every other direction of mind and manners and business.

Perfect simplicity of spirit is the heavenly shield against foolish, fanciful forms of religious experience. When people fancy they have found something startling and new, and profoundly hard to be understood, and transcendently fine in religion, it is always because they have left the old, eternal path of white simplicity and become tangled in Satanic fog. A soul that is possessed by the Holy Spirit seeks ever to live in an ocean of pure, tender love, and be full of good works; and it will instinctively avoid rash, unnatural, and overstrained views of religious life and duty. The light the Holy Spirit pours into us is pure and white, not a red, startling aurora borealis; the visions of God He gives to us are lucid, wide, calm, elevating, sweet, restful, and loving, and not those complex, wild, and overstrained notions which are always indicative of fanaticism. The Holy Spirit will turn us into the simple, quiet, non-combative lamb, and not into some great, towering extraordinary giraffe. He will mold us into the lowly, uncomplaining, unostentatious dove, not into some enormous, far-famed albatross.

Thousands of people ruin their religious experience

by forming fictitious and abnormal notions of advanced experiences. They stretch and pray ; strain after some unique, great, dazzling monstrosity of spiritual life, utterly outside of the mind that was in Jesus ; and the devil is ever looking out to gratify such unscriptural desires with counterfeits of grace. They lose their dove-like simplicity, and are soon tangled up with all sorts of absurdities. The Bible reveals to us simplicity of desire—"Thy face, Lord, will I seek ;" simplicity of will—"This one thing I do ;" simplicity of motive—"Do all to the glory of God ;" simplicity of guidance—"Lead me in a plain path," because the enemy is on the complex path. Let us ever seek a Jesus-like simplicity, not only in our experience, but also in work for Him ; never attempting startling and brilliant things ; never wittingly drawing notice to ourselves ; never overtaxing ourselves with huge enterprises ; never parading the feats we have done, or the extra things we are going to do.

Oh, for that perfect, guileless simplicity of heart and life which befits with equal grace an angel or an infant, and makes both of them feel at home with each other !

## XI.

## LOQUACITY.

TALKATIVENESS is utterly ruinous to deep spirituality. The very life of our spirits passes out in our speech, and hence all superfluous talk is a waste of the vital forces of the heart. In fruit-growing, it often happens that excessive blossoming prevents a good crop, and often prevents fruit altogether ; and by so much loquacity the soul runs wild in word-bloom, and bears no fruit. I am not speaking of sinners, nor of legitimate testimony for Jesus, but of that incessant loquacity of spiritual persons, of the professors of purifying grace. It is one of the greatest hindrances to deep, solid union with God. Notice how people will tell the same thing over and over ; how insignificant trifles are magnified by a world of words ; how things that should be buried are dragged out into gossip ; how a worthless, non-essential is argued and disputed over ; how the solemn, deep things of the Holy Spirit are talked of in a light, rattling manner ; until one who has the real baptism of divine silence in his heart feels he must unceremoniously tear himself away to some lonely room or forest, where one can gather up the fragments of his mind, and rest in God. Not only do we need cleansing from sin, but our natural human spirit needs a radical death to its noise and activity and wordiness. See the evil effects of so much talk.

First, it dissipates the spiritual power. The thought and feelings of the soul are like powder and steam—the more they are condensed, the greater their power. The steam that, if properly compressed, would drive a train forty miles an hour, if allowed too much expanse, would not move it an inch; and so the true unction of the heart, if expressed in a few Holy Ghost selected words, will sink into minds to remain forever, but if dissipated in any rambling conversation, is likely to be of no profit.

Second, it is a waste of time. If the hours spent in useless conversation were spent in secret prayer, or deep reading, we would soon reach a region of soul-life and divine peace beyond our present dreams.

Third, loquacity will inevitably lead to saying unwise, or unpleasant, or unprofitable things. In religious conversation, we soon churn up all the cream our souls have in them, and the rest of our talk is pale skim milk, till we get alone with God and feed on His green pasture until the cream rises again. The Holy Spirit warns us that “in the multitude of words there lacketh not sin.” It is impossible for even the best of saints to talk beyond a certain point without saying something unkind, or severe, or foolish, or erroneous. We must settle this personally. If others are noisy and gabby, I must determine to live in constant quietness and humility of heart; I must guard my speech as a sentinel does a fortress, and with all respect for others,

I must many a time cease from conversation or withdraw from company to enter into deep communion with my precious Lord. The cure for loquacity must be from within ; sometimes by an interior furnace of suffering that burns out the excessive effervescence of the mind, or by an overmastering revelation to the soul of the awful majesties of God and eternity, which puts an everlasting hush upon the natural faculties. To walk in the Spirit, we must avoid talking for talk's sake, or merely to entertain. To speak effectively, we must speak in God's appointed, time and in harmony with the indwelling Holy Spirit.

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## XII.

## SORROW FOR SIN.

ALL true sorrow for sin must be imparted to us from God, for He alone knows just how we should feel toward evil. There is something so wretched, so inconceivably awful, in sin, that it destroys our very capacity for any correct feeling toward it ; and the Holy Spirit must impart to us, from the pure sensibilities of God, that holy grief, that fierce principle of sorrow for sin, which is the spring and safeguard of true godliness.

There are a great many degrees of sorrow for actual sin committed which are mingled with feelings of remorse, dread, guilt, fear of wrath. This degree of



sorrow may have a great outburst of manifestation, but it is not the deepest form of grief for sin.

When there is a sorrow for the deep, hidden sinfulness of the heart, the very existence of God's love in our hearts makes us to grieve and mourn over the corruptions of our fallen nature. It is by the light of pardoning grace shining in us that we see the vileness and stubbornness of secret depravity; and our grief for our hidden sinfulness is keener and deeper than ever for our horrible actions, because this degree of sorrow is touched more strongly with God's sensibilities to sin, and because we more sensitively feel the utter meanness and stubbornness of the essence of sin. It is out of this sorrow for heart-sin that there springs an intense thirst for universal purity.

Then, after we are pardoned and purified, even though the sting of guilt and the inward motives of sin are removed, there is planted in us, by the Holy Spirit, a finer and continuous sorrow for the dreadful fact and effects of sin. After we have been washed in the precious blood, there will be times in holy devotion when the spotless character and goodness and majesty and tenderness of our Lord will so open up to our view that the hot tears will burst from our eyes, and a deep, tender, melting sorrow for the sad fact of our sin will go all over us.

This is not a human, but a divine kind of sorrow. In human sorrow over sin there is a chafing, fretting,



recrimination, self-denunciation, which is in itself sinful; there is denouncing sin in such a severe, sinful spirit as to add to the very sin that is being denounced. And so there is a poor, human sort of grief over sin by which we lash and fret and call ourselves hard names, which is only a heathenish form of grief. When God takes us up into sweet, holy union with Himself, we will see that it is as great sin to fret and rage at ourselves as at our fellows. This deep, fixed sorrow for sin I now speak of is God's sorrow for it—the sorrow that Jesus had for the sinfulness of sin, from the hour He clothed Himself in our flesh and bones. This kind of sorrow is deep, quiet, melting; it can blend itself with holy joy and praise, just as you can see a purple tinge in the finest electric light. This highest and Christ-like form of sorrow for sin may not always push itself up into our distinct consciousness, but if the Spirit possesses us, it is always in us as the unrecognized tones in music, or the shaded back-ground to every picture of Divine grace. The more thorough our sorrow over sin, the more persistent will be our progress in holiness.

## XIII.

## IN DEEPER DEGREES.

THE same truths we learn or experience in the beginning of religious life can be so broadened and intensified to us by the Holy Spirit that they seem new to us ; hence the same terms we used to express ourselves by are inadequate to convey the deeper meaning of our hearts. Suppose a young child, a grown person recently converted, a perfected and anointed believer, a disembodied saint in heaven, and one of the oldest angels, were all standing together, and should all repeat in concert the words, "God is love !" What an almost infinite difference there would be in the meaning of those words to each of the five persons respecting the words. While the words are the same, yet, in the apprehension of their significance, there is as great disparity as between a drop of water and the ocean.

There are very few enlargements of the heart in Divine things till the believer passes the Jordan of sanctification ; and even then the great expansions and uplifts into the supernatural life of the Holy Ghost will depend on many conditions.

All the words of God are susceptible of innumerable degrees of meaning, so that the same passage can be fulfilled in us over and over, in a deeper measure, until it hardly seems the same Scripture it used to be ;

and even in the resurrection and glorified states, we will find the words of the Bible accomplished in us in a measure beyond all our present dreams of their meaning. This thought is eminently true when applied to the manifestation of Christ to our inner spirit.

Just suppose we could open every Christian mind on earth, and get a correct picture of what each one has of the Lord Jesus in his or her heart. What a picture-gallery it would make ! What the blessed Jesus is to us in our heart and mind, measures what we are to Him and for Him. It is the operation of the Holy Spirit upon our perceptions, mostly in secret prayer, by which Jesus grows on us, till all our earlier views of Him are eclipsed by deeper and sweeter visions of His person and character. Of this widening perception of Christ in the mind, Faber very sweetly sings :

“ Thou broadenest out with every year,  
Each breadth of life to meet,  
I scarce can think Thou art the same,  
Thou art so much more sweet.

“ With age Thou growest more divine,  
More glorious than before,  
I fear Thee with a deeper fear,  
Because I love Thee more.

“ Changed and not changed, Thy present charms,  
Thy past ones only prove,  
Oh, make my heart more strong to bear  
This newness of Thy love.

“ Jesus ! what hast thou grown to now ?

A joy all joys above,  
Something more sacred than a fear,  
More tender than a love.

“ With gentle swiftness lead me on,

Dear God ! to see Thy face ;  
And meanwhile in my narrow heart,  
Oh, make Thyself more space.”

The newness that Faber speaks of is not really in Jesus or His love, but in our newer apprehension of Him. Oh, what an unlimited field of work the Spirit has to open up all our capabilities to the perceiving and receiving of the riches of Christ !

It often happens that, just after coming through some great loss, or crushing sorrow, or dark trial, that the heart will get a broader, brighter, sweeter view of the Lord than ever in the past, as if the stretching of the soul by intense suffering has qualified it for an outlet into the depths of God.

There are riches in Jesus which can be opened to us in prayer, for which there are no corresponding words in our language ; traits of His character, insights into His God-man personality, glimpses of glory, emotions imparted from Him, unutterable charms revealed to us, which work swift wonders and enlargements in us, but which we are unable to interpret to anyone else. Paul's vision into God may have been a thousand-fold deeper than anything I ever had, when he exclaimed, “ Oh, the depth of the riches ! ” But

after eighteen centuries in a sea of glory, what must be his vision of those riches to-day !

Inasmuch as every truth of Scripture is susceptible of being manifested to our souls in almost unlimited degree of pungency, clearness, and force, we should diligently seek for the Holy Spirit to continually increase these things in us. The depth and altitudes of Divine things can not be had by chance, or under the delusion that God will work them in us anyhow, if we only lie passive in His hand. There are many times and things in which our only true work is to lie passive in God's will, but in other things it requires thoughtfulness, constant, persevering co-operation with the Spirit, to reach the ever-widening fullness of His promises.

As our days go by, the feeling of repentance, of sorrow for sin, of self-nothingness, of gentleness of thought, of tenderness for others, of the vividness of Jesus and His coming, and the reality of all eternal things, should steadily grow in brighter colors and hotter emotions in our souls. Only see how dull and sluggish all our nature is toward Divine realities ; that even after we have been converted and sanctified, the awful effect of the morphine of sin has left such a deposit of indolence and mental stupidity in us as to demand incessant zeal to realize the brightness and power of heavenly things.

Soon—oh, so soon !—we are to stand right in the

blazing realities of God and eternity, and all our faculties are hardly half awake. Do we often think of that inexpressible hour when we shall gaze on our precious Jesus for the first time? Have we seriously determined in union with the Holy Ghost that all spiritual things shall be more and more real to us? God looks at the determinations of our hearts, and if we want the Holy Spirit to make His things powerful to us, we must determine that He shall.

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## XIV.

## BENEFITS OF TEMPTATION.

GRACE has to work a great many miracles in us before we get far enough along to heartily sanction the words of St. James, to "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptation." But there is a place of such victory and union with Christ that the soul can really find a source of joy from every trial and temptation through which it has gone. It is almost impossible for us to see any benefits of being tempted while we are passing through them; the sensibilities are so pierced by fiery darts, the mind is so distracted by evil suggestions, the will is so beset with opposite motives, the rattle of spiritual musketry and smoke of battles obscures the vision from seeing any blessing likely to come out of it. Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them

who are properly exercised thereby. Among the benefits of being tried by temptation, we may mention ;

1. Resisting any given evil to which the soul is tempted will induce an increased hatred for that sin. The very habit of fighting any particular sin will form a habit of loathing for that sin. It is watched as an old and bitter foe. In long and bitter feuds between families there is not only hatred for the principal agents, but hatred for their children, their relatives, their property. So the persistent fight against some old ruling passion, some old besetting sin, arouses in the soul a universal revenge, not only against the old sin itself, but against all its family relatives, and a jealous hatred to all the insidious steps that lead to that sin. The holiest saints in all ages have been those who were the most sorely tempted. Surely it is a great blessing to loath sin, and a still greater blessing to loath that particular sin that has done us the most damage. It is God's design that we shall have the most perfect victory on the very points where we have been the weakest. This requires a limitless crucifixion of self and a complete possession by the Holy Ghost. But it can be done, and has been done, in thousands of cases. And such victory has been brought about by awful temptations to some sin which developed a boundless, unrelenting hatred for that sin.

2. Temptation drives us to a deep, serious study of ourselves ; it makes us take ourselves all to pieces, to



analyze our affections, our wills, our motives, our propensities; it makes us search the quality of our actions, thoughts, words; it makes us scrutinize our real chances for heaven or hell; it makes us dig in solitude to the very secret foundation of our character. Temptation compels us to study the awful nature of sin; it makes us trace the danger of wrong affections, of evil thoughts, of improper words; it opens our eyes to see the hell-fire that stealthily sleeps in so-called little sins. To be thoroughly tempted is the pathway to a thorough knowledge of ourselves and of the malignity of sin.

3. Temptation makes us see our true nothingness and weakness. It withers our cleverness, cauterizes our smartness, teaches us true humiliation and self-abasement. It clips the rattling talkativeness from our tongues, gives us a real, healthy hatred of ourselves, and shows us our demerit in a strong light. It leads us to patient endurance. When we are first tempted, we chafe and fret; when it comes back still stronger, we whimper and whine; the next time, we try to fight the devil with our fist, we bluster with our will-power against being so assaulted; at the next time, we break down and cry like a child whose Sunday clothes have been bespattered by a bad boy; then we wonder what we shall do; then we half despair of getting complete victory; at last we quiver long-sufferingly in the hand of God, and patiently look to Jesus as an afflicted child looks to its mother's face while its wound is being



dressed. But for the severe temptations, the soul would go skipping along, gloating over its own pretty piety, full of self-admiration. As a severe case of small-pox will prevent a pretty face from standing before a mirror, so terrible temptations prevent holy souls from admiring their own graces.

4. Temptation leads us into real heart-felt sympathy and compassion for others. It takes deep trials to soften and widen the sympathies. Every tree has its special parasites to attack it, and it does seem that *severity* is the special parasite that fastens itself onto religion in a human soul. If a cold, condemnatory saint is put through an unexplainable conflict of soul that makes him roll on the floor in agony for hours at a time, while his body is wet with perspiration, when he comes out of that sulphur bath, if he comes out on the Christ-side, there will be a tenderness in his judgment and a broadness in his compassion which no camp-meeting hallelujahs could ever impart.

Blessed are they that endure temptation till not only sinful self is purged out, but till the last form of righteous self is gone, and the soul is taken out of its furnaces into a supernatural embrace of the Holy Spirit.

## XV.

## THE DAILY CROSS.

IT is only after we are crucified to the carnal nature that we can bear our daily cross in the true spirit of our Master. It is by the denial or death of sinful self that we enter the state of perfect obedience in which the daily trials and crosses can be borne in deep fellowship with Jesus. The very order of the words of our Savior seems to indicate the steps of experience. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Here we have, first, crucifixion of the natural self-life; then the purified soul bearing its daily sufferings and hindrances, which brings it into constant walking and fellowship with Christ. It is this daily cross which leads the sanctified soul into a deeper death to self, according to its love and fervor of obedience. What is our daily cross? It is that one or more things which are unavoidable in our lives, and which produce suffering of body or mind or heart. It is that thing which in our poor judgment seems to hinder the easy flow of our religious life. Sometimes our cross may be composed of a combination of things, but as a general rule, it is some one instrument or cause of suffering to the soul. Were there no suffering of some kind involved, then there could be no cross at all, for the only thing in a cross is its pain. The outward form of the daily cross may change with

years, or the same cross may continue till death ; but in some form it abides. It is as impossible for the true saint not to have some cross as it is to walk in the sunshine without having shadow. The Holy Ghost gives us to understand plainly that the multitudes of jolly, ease-loving, and easy-going religionists, who bear no daily suffering with Jesus, are only sectarian-born religious bastards, and not really kingdom-born souls. (See Heb. 12: 8.) It is your daily cross that makes you weep more than any other thing ; that sends you to frequent prayer ; that leads you to ransack the promises ; that makes you cry out, like Jesus, " Father, why is this ? " that causes you to put both arms around the neck of your Savior in yearning love ; that makes you sick of earth and self ; that gives you wistful longings for heaven. Oh, precious old homely, daily cross, what deep, tender, far-reaching effects thou hast wrought through all these prayer-paved years !

There is an hallucination about getting free from our daily cross which needs to be broken ; it is a day-dream worked up in our minds, a beautiful vision that hangs just ahead of us, that some day we will be rid of our cross, that we will have no painful annoyances, and then our feet can fly unimpeded toward heaven. Alas ! that so many saints should get their eyes set on this will-o'-the-wisp dream. If you want deep union with Jesus, getting rid of your cross is the very thing to defeat it. There is a better victory than freedom

from the daily instrument of pain, and that is to pass into that ocean-depth of the Christ-life where every trial can be borne in exactly the same spirit that Jesus bore. Boundless, tender love is the condition for triumphant bearing of our daily cross. When our cross has driven us so deep into the warm ocean-heart of Jesus that we are kept melted and flooded with quiet, lowly, tender, yearning love for God and His kingdom, then the cross will have proved its own balsam, and then every trial will be fuel to the flame of love. To love the cross is understood by only a few Christians. People fancy it means loving the cross on which Christ died. No; it means loving that very cross in our lives that drives us into deep oneness with Christ; it is to meekly, patiently, lovingly embrace to our inner heart the very principle of self-abnegation and self-nothingness. It is often the case that devout Romanists wear hair-cloth and iron or knotted cords next to their skin. All that is too superficial; it does not enter deep enough. Jesus did no such foolish thing. To bear our daily trial as Jesus did, we must take it into our very heart's love, and bear it meekly, quietly, lovingly, as unto God, and not to man.

How long it takes to accept our daily trial as a gift direct from the hands of our Lord! His eyes are on us; He notices our inner feelings, thoughts, and choices as to our cross. The spirit in which we bear our trials here will mark the grade of our standing in the world

to come. It is by persevering prayer that we get on the sunny side of every sorrow, and on the triumphant side of every trial.

It is the sharp grain of sand cutting its way into the oyster that is enveloped with the life-juices of the creature and turned into a pearl; so our daily cross, cutting its way into our life's core by being folded round and round with many tears and loving prayers, becomes in our souls the very pearl of Christ-likeness, and more valuable than all our own chosen blessings. The Holy Ghost can reveal to us the very disposition in which Jesus bore His daily trials, and when we bear ours in the same spirit, then indeed do we have fellowship with Him.

If it does not please our Father to remove our trials, it is because He wants us to seek and receive an overflow of tender love that will bear us on over the trials and in spite of them. Pure, limitless love is the only true victory over trial. Intense love for Jesus is the only water that can make our thorny cross ripen its fruit; so do not cut down your cross, but water it with more love and prayer, and wait for its golden apples.

## XVI.

## THE DOMINANT SOUL QUALITY.

EVERY human soul has been so organized as to possess some one dominant trait, or some combination of traits, or some quality in a certain degree which is not duplicated in exactly the same proportion, perhaps, as in any other soul in creation. God is forever manifesting His exhaustless wisdom and power in producing creatures through all the ages which are unique and different in some respects from all the other myriads, that each soul may be a chosen vessel to show forth His gifts and glory and beauty and wisdom in a peculiar and individual manifestation. In our present condition, with our nature fallen and ignorant, and often, even in the highest state of grace, so hedged about with ignorance and short-sightedness and infirmities, we cannot begin to see the existing beauty and holy dignity and glory that God designs for each one of His loving and obedient children.

There are seven colors in the rainbow. Each of these colors can have ten thousand different shades, and each of these shades can be blended with the other colors and shades of color in untold millions of colors and shades of color. So out of the element of spirit, soul, and body, which enters into the formation of man, and from the five senses of the soul add the intellectual faculties, and the grace of the Spirit operating in

the heart, the Holy Spirit can combine these mental and spiritual qualities in an infinite number of forms and degrees, so that each saint shall possess some signal mark of divine favor, or some exhibition of divine beauty, or some form of love, which will distinguish him from all other creatures in the universe. This will make each one of the countless millions of heaven to have a special sacredness to God, and a special attraction for us. This truth is set forth in the different gems and precious stones which compose the twelve foundations of the city of God, as described in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation. We shall find that each of these twelve precious stones, mentioned in that chapter, have a special virtue and quality of chemistry and beauty of its own, and when we learn the deep interior individuality of the twelve apostles, we shall find that each of those apostles had a unique quality—some dominant trait of moral character—which corresponds precisely with the quality of the various precious stones in the twelve foundations.

It is interesting and helpful to us to recognize this dominant soul quality in the Lord's people. Each person we meet makes a special impression upon our minds and sensibilities which no one else makes. The more thorough the person is saved and filled with the Spirit, and united with the divine mind, the more perfectly will their deep inner personality be brought out and manifested by the Holy Spirit. Some of God's chil-



dren impress us with love, others with illumination, others with great force, others with faith, others with conviction, others with sweetness of spirit, others with humility and resignation, others with authority and a regnant power, others with quietness and retirement. Could our eyes be sufficiently open to see things in the full light of the Holy Spirit, and our keen spiritual sensibilities be perfectly open to the play of spirit-waves, or the detection of spiritual odors, we should find an unspeakable joy in the variety and fellowship of all God's saints. This will be one of the joys of heaven. The soul is larger than the body, and the spirit is larger than the soul. There is a spiritual atmosphere which surrounds us, as the air surrounds the world, and we can feel the touch of this soul-atmosphere.

This dominant quality of an immortal mind not only comes out in social contact, but even in books the writer will put the dominant quality of his mind. In reading the writings of Wesley, I am always impressed with his will-power. Whatever I may read from his pen, in his journal, or sermons, I am always impressed with that firm, tireless, overmastering, persevering, conquering will-power which was in the man. This has always been the effect of His writing upon me, so much so that it tires me to read very much of his writings at a time. I believe Wesley had the strongest and purest will of any man in a thousand years.

When I read John Fletcher, I am impressed with an intense, burning eagerness for God, and of a consuming desire for the fullness of God, and tireless, incessant spirit of prayer for the heavenly filling. This is the dominant quality of his writings upon me.

When I read Madame Guyon, I feel the quality of utter self-abnegation, self-renunciation, and deep, fathomless abandonment to God. This quality pervades her poetry, her biography, her writings; in her domestic life, in prison, at all times, the reigning trait of her soul seems to be annihilation of self.

In reading Fenelon, I am impressed with great gentleness and sweetness of spirit, and a flexible, yielding, tender, compassionate thoughtfulness, and heavenly sweetness. It seems to pervade, like a divine odor, everything He touches.

In reading Faber, I am aware of a great illumination and wonderful discernment unto God and the human spirit, and clearness, the white heat of devotion, the very poetry of light, the purity and gentle melody of sunbeams and stars and crystal fountains; such insights into God; such glowing visions of the Trinity; such cloudless perception of things in heaven. But it is the light of a hot sun flaming with devotion, and not the light of a winter moon.

The writings of George Muller predominantly impressed me with patient prayer. He is known as a man of great faith, and yet the all-pervading quality in his

writing to me is that of patient prayer—the attitude of waiting on God and finding out His will before one step is taken. This is a very high type of faith, for there are thousands of different aspects and degrees of faith.

Dr. Cullis, with whom I had the pleasure of personal acquaintance, pre-eminently impressed me with a child-like, simple trust. I found it always easy to believe God in His presence. He seemed to carry an atmosphere of trust along with Him. There was in Dr. Cullis a gentleness, sweet, child-like playfulness and infant-like trust which seemed to have nothing arduous in it.

Dr. Sheridan Baker had to me the dominant quality of well-poised accuracy and precision. His words, his behavior, his writings, his business transactions, his plans, his whole life and expression, seemed moulded in a beautiful, well-balanced precision; nothing redundant, or extravagant, or narrow, or little, or outlandish, or absurd. Everything in the man seemed as beautifully poised as the blue dome of heaven. Look at the way he managed his business; disbursed his money. Look at his writings; can you find one foolish, extravagant, or superfluous word? He was, in a very eminent degree, a man of wisdom and heavenly accuracy.

Inskip impressed me all the time as a warrior and leader, a man of unbounded magnetism, a Bonaparte

in the Holy Ghost. He could sway thousands of people as easily as a lion sways a cat. He could arouse a vast audience into a foaming sea of enthusiasm, with waves of white-capped excitement breaking on the shore, and in a few moments could quell them to a placid lake, whose tiny ripples of low-breathed prayer were hardly audible on the beach.

I have met humble and saintly women, who spoke only a few words ; but there was a quality of hid-away quietness in God which came out of them, and impressed me for days and months like the sweet minor strains of some delicate instrument in a great orchestra.

Every flower has its own perfume, every gem its own lustre, every bird its own note, every eye its own peculiar lustre, every heart its own regnant quality ; and if we will give ourselves up utterly to the possession of the Holy Spirit, and seek constantly to be filled more and more with the Christ-life, God will make each one of us a chosen vessel of some precious gift or spiritual quality for the manifesting of His will to others. It is useless for any one *to try* to exert a good influence. All such effort is miserable machinery. It is our place to walk with God, live a continual prayer, be flooded with the gentle Spirit, seek to please God, and He will see to it that a subtle fire shall always proceed from us, which will burn itself indelibly into other souls in such a manner as to glorify God.

## XVII.

## ALONE WITH GOD.

OVER and over, deeper and deeper, do we have to learn the meaning of God's words, until the faint perceptions we first had of them seem as dew-drops compared with the fathomless ocean we find in them at the last. "And he was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him till the break of day." All elect souls pass many times this station of aloneness with God, and they find that the wrestling always lasts till the breaking of day.

We have to be alone with God in finding personal salvation. Others may be used as instruments in bringing conviction, light, help in various ways ; but there comes a crisis, both in the work of regeneration and of sanctification, in which the soul must be detached from others, and deal only with God. How utterly impertinent are human words in such a crisis ! We must meet our Jesus singly ; we must apprehend Him for ourself ; He must speak to us with His own voice. In such an hour we gaze on the salvation promises, such as, "Thy sins will be forgiven thee," or, "I will, be thou clean ;" but the words on paper need to be imparted into our consciousness, and to effect this, they must be re-spoken into us by the Holy Ghost. No true soul will be satisfied with an inference of salvation, or a dead legal imputation of holiness, or the

opinions of others as to our state ; nothing less than God alone pouring His assurance into our spirits will answer.

The dear Redeemer who loved us from eternity, and "formed us for Himself," will not leave the pining soul to the second-handed tinkering of others ; He will closet us with Himself, and re-speak into us those living words out of His Book that have been spoken to seeking souls in every generation of the world. God longs to give each of us a perfect personal assurance of His perfect salvation. We must be alone with God in the matter of suffering. The One who loves us best fits the furnace to our frame, and never once duplicates the pattern for any other soul. There are innumerable degrees of suffering among God's chosen ones, yet in each case it is unique and personal. The ingredients of suffering are of infinite variety in kind and mixture, but the end to be accomplished is the same. God will not allow us to pick our crosses, or to exchange them with our neighbor. Oftentimes our chief cross is born with us into the world, and stays with us through all vicissitudes of life, and all the operations of grace, till we have washed it thousands of times with our tears, till at last, conquered and mellowed and sweetened into utter tenderness of spirit, we smile upon the rough old instrument, and praise God for all its painfulness to us. Some forms of suffering have the community feature in them, and can be shared by

others ; but our very choicest sufferings, those that accomplish God's individual purpose in us, those that most thoroughly test us and unite us to His will, these are private property, into which no other ever enters but our sympathizing Jesus. "I will lead the blind in a way they have not known." The Lord selects for each of us those crucifixions which will most perfectly mortify us, and reduce us to our lone nothingness. In the earlier stages of deep interior suffering we foolishly fly to some chosen creatures for sympathy and help ; but in taking our soul-sorrows to earthly friends, we are apt to find one of three results—either God permits them to be cold and uninterested in us, or we find them loaded with woes of their own, or else they do us more harm than good by superficial, or fanatical, or unheavenly words. Our sufferings should lead to four things—to detach us from creature-comforts by driving us to bury our souls deep in the bosom of God ; next, to take Jesus in as a partner of our pains, that "in all our afflictions He was afflicted ;" next, recognize the presence of God in every step of our trials ; and fourthly, that we be so thoroughly softened by our sufferings as to have an unlimited-tenderness for all other sufferers of every kind. The very best and most fruitful of our mortifications are those in which God locks us in alone with Himself, and thereby saturates us with the Holy Spirit. In matters of divine guidance and spiritual understanding, God often hems us in alone



with Himself, and deals with us and reveals His will to us in ways and things that our friends can have no comprehension of. When we are not in communion with God, He will lead us by secondary agents ; but the closer we enter into union with Him, the more directly and exclusively He guides by His spirit.

If we walk in constant fellowship with the Spirit, we will have illuminations into providence and duty for ourselves personally, which our best friends may not always see. "He knoweth the way that I take, and when I am tried I shall come forth as gold." God always has some child passing through the experience of these words. How little other people understand of the real inner life we are living ! Those who think they know us so well, and can give us volumes of advice, often know us very little. The best of saints misunderstand our faults, just as the ungodly misunderstand our graces. God will find a thousand ways to detach us from creatures and to wed us to Himself alone, for He is determined that no one else shall be our God. No human being on earth, even the best of saints, can be any real benefit to me in love or comfort or counsel, except as they are the channels of God to me ; whatever they give me out of their own human nature will soon prove poison to my real well-being. There is not one atom of balm in the universe except from Jesus. When God truly leads along any given path, the outcome will evidence it to be of Him, how-

ever queer or wrong it may seem to many who are wise and prudent. As Faber sings:

“ Ill that He blesses is most good,  
And unblest good is ill,  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet will.”

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### XVIII.

### INTO THE DEEP.

IN the 5th chapter of Luke, from the first to the seventh verses, we have an account of Jesus teaching on Lake Gennesaret, and afterwards of the disciples launching out and letting down their nets for a draught of fishes, which is full of suggestive thoughts.

1. Before they launched out they were to hear the word of God (verse 1). This is the first preliminary to all of life or service. The first thing we need to hear is God's word. Before we can repent, or believe, or move out on life's duty, we need to receive in our innermost being the living word of God. As the earth is dead until shined upon by the sun, so there is no capability of life or service in us until we hear the living word. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word.” It is the living word touching our faculties, piercing our conscience, melting our hearts, moving our will, vitalizing our motives, which prepares us for obedience. In proportion as God's word enters

into us, in that proportion are we qualified for our mission.

2. "*Launch.*" When He had left speaking, He said to Peter, "Launch out. So it is when we have heard His word spoken into us, by the living Spirit, we are then prepared for the command to launch out. This word implies the *act of the will*, which has been vitalized by the hearing of the living word. Previous to hearing the word, the will is sluggish and rebellious; it has no motive or energy along lines of righteousness; but the imparted word opens up motives, imparts strength, and arouses in the will the principle of choice and determination, which constitutes the tap-root of moral character. There must be a fixed choice against all evil, or for all good. It is this fixed choice of the will which makes the central element of character. God watches the determination of the heart. This word "launch" implies throwing ourselves in utter dependence on the Lord—a co-operation with the Spirit, a giving up of our will to His guidance.

In seeking pardon, or sanctification, or healing, or entering some special service, in various ways there come times in our lives where, after hearing the truth, we are to boldly, with all our will-power, "launch out."

3. "*From the shore.*" To launch out implies launching from the shore. Going from the shore was to leave the multitude, the sights and sounds of *terra*

*firma*; to leave home, and friends, and all that was on the land. How much this implies to us who will hear all the living word, and launch from the shore! It implies launching out from nature, with its laws, sciences, philosophies, from its materialism. It implies launching from the natural mind, with its carnal reasoning, opinions, taste, its prudence and whims, and fashions. It implies launching from all our past—past failures and successes, all our past sins, and all our past righteousness as well. The cutting of the shore line that ties us to anything behind; the letting of all things go, that, like a receding shore to the sailor, it may fade from our vision.

4. "*Into the deep.*" How deep He does not say. The depth into which we launch will depend upon how perfectly we have given up the shore and the greatness of our need, and the apprehension of our possibilities. The fish were to be found in the deep, not in the shallow water. So with us; our needs are to be met in the deep things of God.

We are to launch into the deep of God's word, which the Spirit can open up to us in such crystal, fathomless meaning that the same words we have accepted in times past will have an ocean meaning to them, which renders their first meaning to us very shallow. Into the deep of atonement, until Christ's precious blood is so illuminated by the Spirit that it becomes an omnipotent balm, and food and deep medi-

cine for the soul and body. Into the deep of the Father's will, until we apprehend it in its infinite minuteness and goodness, and its far-sweeping provision and care for us. Into the deep of the Holy Spirit, until He becomes a bright, dazzling, sweet, fathomless summer sea, in which we bathe and bask and breathe, and lose ourselves and our sorrows in the calmness and peace of His everlasting presence. Into the deep of God's providences, where we find the most marvellous answers to prayer, the most tender and careful guidance, the most thoughtful anticipation of our needs, the most accurate and supernatural shaping of events. Into the deep of God's purposes and coming kingdom, until the Lord's coming and His millennial reign are opened up to us ; and beyond these the bright entrancing ages on ages unfold themselves, until the mental eye is dazed with light, and the heart flutters with inexpressible anticipations of its joy with Jesus and the glory to be revealed. Into all these things Jesus bids us launch. He made us, and He made the deep, and to its fathomless depths He has fitted our longings and capabilities.

5. "*Down your nets.*" Their nets were the instruments for making their living. To us it signifies letting down our gifts, talents, occupations, into the will of God. Whatever we can utilize of money or business, or voice or pen, or thoughts or labor, or personal magnetism, yielding it utterly to the sway of the

Spirit, sinking it all in the sea of His will beyond our vision, trusting all results with Him.

6. "*All night, and nothing.*" At that same place they had toiled all night and taken nothing. What failures they had experienced ! How weary and discouraged they were ! But God loves to take the most forlorn failures and turn them into successes. God loves to work in such a way as to outwit all the wise. By His gentle omnipotence, He takes disappointment, failure, trouble, desolation, and all sorts of losses, and out of them coins the gold of victory and success. Faber sings :

" God's glory is a wondrous thing,  
Most strange in all its ways,  
And of all things on earth least like  
What men agree to praise.

" For He can endless glory weave,  
From what men reckon shame ;  
In His own world He is content  
To play a losing game."

7. "*At thy word.*" The pivot on which Peter's faith swung was the word "nevertheless." Notwithstanding our failure all night, "at Thy word we will let down the net." This was simple faith embodied in obedience. Obedience is the body in which the soul of faith lives and moves. We are to believe and obey at His word, notwithstanding the awful failures of the past ; right on the spot of past defeat, over the same waters, with the same net, in the same boat, without

any visible signs of success, we are to drop ourselves into His will. Simply obey, and leave it with Him, whether we take any fish or not. The more perfectly we see our failure, the more perfectly can we enter into the meaning of this "nevertheless at the word."

8. "*Their net brake.*" "The lame have taken the prey." The draught of fishes was more than they asked or thought; it was larger than the measure of their nets, or the size of their boat, or the thinking of their minds.

This same Jesus stands on our sea of life, waiting for us to yield an utter obedience, and willing to do in us and for us "exceeding abundantly above our asking or thinking," on lines of experience and usefulness.

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## XIX.

### CONCERNING ANNIHILATION.

ONE of the most whimsical and foolish delusions which Satan in recent years has palmed off on some shallow-thinking Christians is the heresy that the souls of the wicked are to be annihilated. This error was never known among the ancient heathens, who believed, even before they had a revealed religion, that the souls of the good and the bad both exist forever.

There is no darkness like that which comes from rejected light. The rejection of the plain teachings



of God's word has brought greater infidels than the heathen ever knew, and more heresies than the ancients ever dreamed of.

This notion of the annihilation of the wicked is propagated by putting a false meaning upon the Bible words "destruction" and "punishment." The word "destroy" does not mean to annihilate, but to wreck, ruin, render utterly useless for the purpose for which it was made. The words "everlasting destruction," "everlasting punishment," are perverted into meaning annihilation. If the wicked are to be annihilated and their punishment will not be everlasting, then their destruction will not be "everlasting." The everlastingness of punishment is put opposite the everlastingness of reward; and if it does not mean everlasting in the one case, neither does it mean that in the other.

Again, the word "death" is perverted into meaning annihilation. But the term "death" is the opposite of "life," and not the opposite of existence. Life and death are opposites; existence and non-existence are opposites; and it is false reason to take the opposite of life and make it mean the opposite of something else. We know in the realm of nature and of mind, that death is not annihilation. A piece of plank is dead; it was once a living tree, full of life, and the life has now left it; but it still exists. A dead human body still exists, with all its members and organs, though the life has left it; yet not one particle is an-

annihilated. And in the realm of mind, Satan and evil spirits are dead in sin—they are separated from the true life of God, which is love; and yet they exist. And just as truly and as rationally as demons have an existence, who are separated from the life of God, so the souls of the wicked will exist forever, though dead in sin. This is implied in the words of Jesus, when He shall say: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into hell, prepared for the devil and his angels." These very words imply that the wicked exist co-extensively with Satan and bad angels.

Again, there is not a single hint in the whole realm of matter of all kinds that anything will ever be annihilated. The Holy Spirit says, in Ecc. 3: 14: "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it, and God doeth it that men should fear before Him."

This statement covers the whole extent of creation. There is no sign that any atom of matter has ever been annihilated. Created substances can undergo a thousand changes—solids become liquids, liquids solids, gases turn into rocks, and rocks into vapor—and there is no trace in the history of the world of anything like annihilation. And so in the human mind; we may forget millions of things, but under certain mental conditions, every event in our past lives can be recalled to the recollection.

This delusion of annihilation bears upon its very

face the handiwork of the devil ; it is just the doctrine that will suit the wicked—give them license to live as they please in this life, with the hope of plunging into non-existence when they leave this world.

No Christian can entertain an error like this without weakening the spiritual life, for all error is poison to the soul. Yet there are many people who fancy they can walk in communion with the Holy Ghost, and yet drink down this heresy that is afloat in the world. Some professed Christians fancy that they are more merciful than the Lord, and they think it will help out the doctrine of divine mercy to accept of such errors. But we must be careful how we accept of the doctrine of mercy from the devil, for it is his aim to turn every truth of the word of God into a lie.

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XX.

CONCERNING SOUL SLEEPING.

WE are living in the times when the winds of heresy are blowing in every direction. One of these foolish heresies is “that the soul of man sleeps in utter unconsciousness from the time of death until the resurrection.” In all those Scriptures where death is called a sleep, the plain reference is to the body. The only sleep that the Scriptures ascribe to the soul is to be asleep in sin. Sin acts upon the soul as opium on the body, rendering it unconscious of the things of

eternity. Hence the word says, "Awake, thou that sleepest!"

We find in the Scripture the following facts to disprove the sleep of the soul in a disembodied state :

*I. That the soul has a natural constitution of immortality.*

We are told by Paul, in the 15th of 1st Corinthians, that Adam was made a living soul, but that Christ was made a quickening Spirit. The word "living soul" signifies an immortal soul; but Adam had no power to communicate spiritual life after his fall. On the other hand, Christ not only had an immortal soul, but power to regenerate other souls, and quicken them with the life of God. This is the difference between the first and second Adam.

We are told, in Ecclesiastes, 3d chapter, that the spirit of a man goeth upward, but that the spirit of a beast goeth downward; proving that at death the soul of man, in its mode of existence, is opposite to the soul of a beast. We read in Zechariah, 12th chapter, that the "Lord formeth the spirit of man within Him." And the Apostle speaks of an "inner man." All such Scripture plainly teaches that the soul has a formation and constitution independent of the physical life.

*II. We read in several places that after persons had died, they were raised from the dead by their souls coming back into their bodies, showing that it was immortal.*

In 1st Kings, 17th chapter, we read the account of

Elijah's raising the widow's son from the dead. It says : " And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." A similar passage is found in the 8th chapter of Luke, where Jesus raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, when He said : " Maid, arise ; her spirit came again, and she arose straightway." These Scriptures prove that the soul is a conscious, immortal personality ; that it can exist in the body and out of the body, and returns again into the body.

*III. The Scriptures speak of the soul going down to hell after the body is dead.*

In the 14th chapter of Isaiah, we have an account of the death of the tyrannical king of Babylon, and his descent into hell. He was such a great man that at his death " hell from beneath was moved to meet him at his coming ;" and the other wicked kings, who had gone into hell before him, " rose to meet him at his coming," and exclaimed, " Art thou become like unto us !" We are also told, in verse 16, that they " looked narrowly upon him, and considered him," exclaiming, " Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms !" And while all this was taking place in hell, we are told that his body was in the grave " covered with worms." (See verse 11.)

In the 10th chapter of Matthew, Jesus warns us " not to fear them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to

destroy both soul and body in hell," in which Jesus shows clearly that the soul can exist apart from the body; that it cannot be killed, as the body can, and that it can be in hell apart from the body.

The Lord also tells us of an actual occurrence, in the 16th of Luke, of a "certain rich man" that died, "and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." This man's soul had been asleep in sin all his life, and he never woke up to the reality of eternal things until he awoke in hell. This is the condition of millions to-day. They will never get their souls' eyes opened until they open them in hell.

*IV. That the soul is alive and conscious when separated from the body is clearly shown from a great many Scriptures.*

We see, in Ecclesiastes, 12th chapter, that at death the dust of man's body "returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns unto God who gave it."

" Life is real, life is earnest,  
And the grave is not its goal,  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul."

Jesus told the penitent thief on the cross that before that day ended he would be with Him in Paradise. (See Luke 23: 43.) The real man to whom Christ was talking was not the fleshly body which was soon buried, but the immortal spirit in the body. He says, "Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," showing that

the real man would be conscious and happy in a world of bliss, away from all the sufferings of the body.

Paul tells us, in 2d Corinthians, 5th chapter, that "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord," but that we who have the earnest of the Spirit are "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." He also tells us, in the same Epistle, 12th chapter, that at the time he was stoned at Lystra, and left for dead, he was caught up into Paradise, and that whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell, and that while in that state he heard unspeakable words; proving conclusively that the real, thinking, knowing soul can exist apart from the body, with all its faculties and powers intact.

Peter tells us, in his Epistle, 3d chapter, that after Christ was crucified, "He went unto the spirits in prison, who had died in the Flood, and proclaimed unto them His victory," showing that the souls of those drowned in the Flood were alive, and had been confined in a place of imprisonment ever since the days of Noah.

*V. The recognition of souls in the disembodied state is expressly stated in nearly all the foregoing Scriptures.*

The souls in hell immediately recognized the king of Babylon, in Isaiah 14. The rich man in hell at once recognized Abraham and Lazarus across the impassable



gulf ; and Abraham noticed his lost kinsmen. Moses had died, and his body was buried in one of the valleys in the mountains of Moab ; but we read, in Luke 9: 30, that at the transfiguration of Jesus, Moses and Elijah appeared with Him, and that they were recognized by three apostles. When Stephen was being stoned he saw the heavens opened and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and he said, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This demonstrates the fact that the spirit of Stephen was not going to die or sleep with his body, and that he recognized the Savior in heaven. When St. John was in Patmos, receiving the revelation, he " saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and he heard them cry, ' How long, O Lord ? ' " (Rev. 6: 9-11). This proves that these disembodied martyrs were not asleep ; that they were recognized by the Apostle ; that they possessed all their faculties ; that they could pray ; and that they were earnestly expecting the time to receive their resurrected and glorified bodies.

These Scriptures teach that souls in the disembodied state possess all their mental faculties—thought, memory, reason, perception—unimpaired ; and that they have the same moral character that they had in the body ; that they have suffering or joy, torment or comfort ; that they recognize each other ; that they can communicate with each other ; that they take a great

interest in the moral affairs of this world in reference to its destiny.

In confirmation of these Scriptures, volumes could be compiled of dying sinners who have had glimpses into hell, and dying saints who have had visions into heaven, and recognized the presence of angels and departed friends ere they left the body. For a Christian to be so deceived as to believe that the soul is unconscious after death, shows either a lack of Scripture knowledge, or a mind that is deluded by Satan.

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## XXI.

### GIVING THE TENTH.

**I**T is no small perversion of Scripture that the passage in Malachi 3: 10, about bringing the tithes into the storehouse, should always be applied to a spiritual consecration. If thousands of Christians would only take it just as it reads, and begin at once to give God a tenth of all they receive, it would prove to be the keystone in the arch of a full consecration, and one of the greatest blessings of their lives, both spiritually and temporally.

Some may say that the giving of a tenth was only a Mosaic law; but this is a mistake; it was in practice by the saints of God five hundred years before the giving of the law. Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils to the priest of God (Hebrew 7: 4); and Jacob gave a

tenth of his income to the Lord ; and, so far as we know, it was the practice of Noah and the saints of earliest ages. When the Holy Spirit gets possession of a soul, He writes this principle of giving a tenth on the heart, showing it is not merely a Mosiac, but a Holy Ghost law.

There are marvelous spiritual blessings connected with giving a tenth to the Lord ; it is a wonderful stimulant to faith ; it strengthens obedience on all other lines ; it brings light into the mind on other subjects ; it is as a safeguard against greed and stinginess ; it makes benevolence a fixed affection in the soul, and not a spasmodic action ; it makes us appreciate our nine-tenths far more ; it makes God's special providence more real to us ; it makes the conscience tender, and gives sweet access to God in prayer.

It is a great blessing financially to constantly give a tenth of all you receive to the Lord. The living God keeps His financial promises just as absolutely as He does His salvation promises. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase ; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty." How few Christians positively believe this word and steadily act on it ! I have never yet met a person who gave regularly a tenth to the Lord that ever regretted it. They uniformly testify that since they have done so, they have prospered far better in all their temporal affairs. I am absolutely sure, with

Muller, that God does not want any of His children in debt, or destitute ; and if all of us who are in debt will repent of the sin for getting in debt, and promise God never to go in debt again, and to give Him one-tenth of all we receive, and stick to the covenant with a loving heart, He will begin to work financial mercies for us, and soon have us free from debt. (See Rom. 13: 8.)

After losing my orange groves in the freeze of January, 1895, and being heavily in debt, I acted on these principles ; and since I made that covenant, God has wrought up undreamed-of financial miracles. A lady thousands of miles from my home wrote me, to my surprise, saying she felt *impressed* of God to give me \$80 every year till my debts were paid ; and many other things have happened just as marvelous. Since that covenant I have never gone a cent deeper in debt ; have never been without some cash money, and have a hundred-fold more assurance for all financial supplies than when I had the property. So firm is my faith on this point that if I had no postage stamp to send a letter to my family, and had some of God's tenth by me, I would not touch it to buy a stamp, but wait on my Heavenly Father for it.

God will not do wonders for us till we get away from our slipshod faith and partial obedience. A great many will say they keep no regular account ; they think they give about a *tenth*, etc. That is the

way I used to give, but I see now that is shilly-shally obedience. It will please God to give Him the tenth, and not a guess about the tenth. Then some aim to give a tenth at the end of the month, or end of the year. This is degrading our Lord by putting self first and Him last. Honor God by putting Him and His kingdom always first, and then He will honor you. Just as soon as you receive any money, be it ever so small, take out the tenth for the Lord ; do not wait till you spend the nine-tenths ; do not use it all up, and promise to pay the Lord's tenth out of the next money you get ; that is a slovenly, shabby way of dealing with God. Treat your Lord in all these matters with the respect and honor as if He stood visibly by your side ; don't be mean and stingy in your treatment of Him, but generous and prompt and free-hearted, and God will treat you like a prince, and ever and anon He will astonish you with some great favor. Be you ever so poor, old or young, married or single, parent or child, even if you have only an occasional dime to call your own, give one cent of it to God ; do it religiously, lovingly, rigidly, and, as sure as you live, Omnipotence will find some way to bless you in your temporal affairs.

Will you believe this? Will you begin at once to do it? Ask the Holy Ghost to help you keep it as a holy covenant. Ask for divine guidance just where you should give the tenth ; don't bestow it according

to your preference, but keep your mind impartial, and the Spirit will lead you where to give it.

If you follow this rule, you will be perfectly surprised how much you can give away in a year and never miss it. I used to think I was liberal; but since giving a tenth regularly, I find I give three times as much as I used to, and do it with far more ease and comfort.

“Give, and it shall be given you.” God’s word is true; obey it, prove it, and see for yourself.

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## XXII.

### “LET GOD.”

THE name of God occurs thirty-five times in the first thirty-five verses in Genesis; and the word “let” occurs fourteen times in the same verses. The number thirty-five is five times the religious number seven, and fourteen is twice the religious number seven, and put together they make seven times seven, which is the Pentecostal number of Scripture; so that the words “let God” form the key to the religious life, and the key to the Pentecostal measure of that life. The first “let” is, “Let there be light,” and the last is, “Let them have dominion over all things.” So that from the first dawn of divine light in the soul up to the glorious kingdom in the new earth, the secret of every step is to be so utterly yielded to the unfolding

will of God as to let Him work in us, and by us, and for us.

When we are seeking pardon, how all our mental powers are tangled in darkness, all our heart rent with such mingled emotions of fear, hope and sorrow ! how our will struggles like a chained animal, till in self-despair we throw ourselves for weal or woe into the hands of Jesus, and just *let* Him save us !

Then when, as believers, we are heart-sick over our interior sinfulness of nature, and longing for inward rest and purity of soul, after so many sore conflicts and unexplainable alternations between light and darkness, we are brought to a crisis, and the little words, “let God,” are the only outlet from self-struggling into the calm, sweet rest of the cleansing power of Jesus. Those who receive Jesus for the healing of their bodies have the same lesson of “let God” to learn over again. How much physical or mental suffering we endure, how many swingings of hope and fear between sanity and insanity, between life and death, how many tossings of argument in the reason for and against divine healing, before one learns to yield all the ills of the body to the healing will of Jesus, and without a struggle or an anxiety just “let” Him pour the health-virtue of His precious body through every part of the being. And then, in addition to these definite steps of “letting God,” there are numerous instances in the seeking of larger endue-



ments of the Holy Spirit, in the department of God's providences, where we have to learn over and over again to cease from all our planning, all our imaginings of ways and means, all our uneasiness or care, and just calmly, sweetly, patiently, humbly "let God" manage and work in us and for us along lines beyond all our dreaming. These words "let God" are the latch to hundreds of doors in the vast palaces of divine life and providence. The Lord has ways of shutting up His children at times in mysterious providential walls, through which all their ingenuity and labor can make no door. How often they strive to break through impenetrable walls of limitation and difficulty, think of ways and agencies of getting through till the brain aches, when at last they lie helpless and limp, and consent to "let God" do good as He pleases; when lo! the iron gates of circumstance and hindrances open noiselessly of their own accord. (See Acts 22: 10.) Because we have "let God" convert, or sanctify, or heal us, does not insure a perpetual letting of God in all other matters and directions. As a rule, we have to learn to "let God" do in us and for us, over a great many times and in a variety of things, before we form a fixed habit of always letting Him.

It is only by an intimate union with the Holy Spirit, causing our innermost being to move in steady harmony with God, that we can be ready at every sharp turn and under all sorts of circumstances to "let

God” mould and move all our welfare according to His best purpose. It is not a cold fatalism or stocial indifference to God’s will, but a warm, bright gulf-stream of Holy Ghost life, in which all the choices, motives, intentions, affections, and volitions steadily coincide and co-operate with God’s will concerning us. “Let the peace of God rule in your heart,” “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,” “Let not your heart be troubled.” Let God have all your inner and outer difficulties just as they are, without moving a finger to tinker them up. Let the slow, imperceptible, noiseless ocean of omnipotence flow into you, into your being, your life, your troubles, your friends, foes, finances, into that unexplainable mystery which perplexes you, into that very thing that just now weighs upon you.

From this moment lift the latch of your will, and let that eternal, silent sea of love, in which all the angels, all the worlds, and all ages float, take possession of you and yours forever. If from the very depths of our hearts we yield a constant, loving “let” to God, then He, through the eternal Spirit, will speak into us and for us all these fourteen “lets” of His marvelous creation, from “Let there be light,” to “Let him have dominion over” all things

## XXIII.

## BURDENS OF PRAYER.

WHILE Jesus is making intercession at the right hand of God, the Holy Spirit on the earth is praying through the hearts of those in whom He dwells. The human spirit is the vehicle through which the Holy Ghost pours His deep, divine yearnings, and in the same proportion that He widens and fills our souls, will He breathe into us these strong, sweet, melting intercessions, which are according to the will of the Father.

It is an infinite honor for the Spirit to put any burden of prayer on us, even when it is for our personal or family welfare ; but when He draws us out into the priestly life of Christ, and puts in us unspeakable prayer for persons and objects that lie far beyond our personal or family interests, then it is in a higher sense praying in the Holy Ghost and alone for God's glory. The Spirit will divide and diversify His burdens of prayer according to the grace and gifts of each believer, calling some to pray in one direction and others in another, and He will put the pressure of prayer on and continue it, according to the soul's capacity, and its degree of willing co-operation with God in the prayer. A history of special burdens of prayer, as to their intensity and duration, would be amazing, especially if traced in connection with the answer that followed.

Many years ago the Spirit drew me out in some singular prayers. For over a month I was led to prayer for little children who were unmercifully whipped; they would be brought before my mind so vividly I could almost hear their screams, and I would weep and pray for them as if my heart would break. Then, for over a month, I was burdened to plead for the insane, and at such seasons I could mentally see them, and enter into their sufferings beyond anything I had imagined.

One day, in the winter of 1879 and 1880, there fell on me suddenly a great prayer for the spread of holiness in the Southern States. I was led to pray three or four times a day for this; the spiritual condition of the Churches from Norfolk, Va., to New Orleans was revealed to me in such marvelous light, from day to day, as no one would credit unless they had a similar experience. My tears flowed in streams; my heart swelled and throbbed with unutterable longings to evangelize in my native Southland. I was then a pastor in New Albany, Indiana. When that burden of prayer had continued for two months, I learned with joy that the celebrated John S. Inskip and party were in Charleston, S. C., conducting a great holiness Revival. In after years I met Miller Willis, of South Carolina, and to my surprise I found that he and another friend had been praying together every night for three months, and at the same time I was led to pray.

Three years after that time I had the great joy of attending a wonderful Holiness Convention in Gainesville, Ga., at which time there was organized the first Holiness Association ever formed in the South, so far as I know. Since then, what has God wrought ! In the past few years, since passing through many inexpressible trials on various lines, it has pleased the Holy Ghost to again draw me out into the deep, warm gulf-stream of intercessory prayer. I never tire of it ; and if I can find the time, I love to spend from two to four hours every day in secret pleading with God.

At 4 P. M., January 3d, 1895, an overwhelming prayer came on me for a great Holiness Mission in San Francisco, which continued every day for a year.

In July, 1895, another burden of prayer was given me for a great Revival of sanctification among the black people of the South, lasting six months.

In September, 1895, one afternoon a great longing prayer came in my heart for a mighty outpouring of the Spirit in sanctifying and healing power upon the north of Ireland. This prayer for Ireland has been on me with many tears for over seven months.

In December, 1895, I was burdened for Cuba and Armenia and Persia, for their liberation from the beast and the false prophet, and opening up to full Gospel light.

In January, 1896, there came a deep, sad, weeping prayer in my soul for the poor little girl-widows of

India ; as I pray for them, my heart aches, and they seem as dear to me as my own children.

In the past three months I have been much drawn to pray for large outpourings of the Spirit in Pueblo, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Staunton, Va. In addition to these, I have special and peculiar longings in prayer for various persons ; in some cases for their conversion, others for sanctification, others for healing, others for deliverance from awful snares of Satan which I felt they were getting into, others for financial relief, others for God to send them to mission fields. Some of these burdens have been painful, even distressing ; some have been accompanied with a longing and pining of heart, and some were with a heavenly sweetness and tenderness beyond expression. In some cases, the prayers came on me suddenly and powerfully, and, after days or months, gradually left me ; in other instances, they came gradually, getting stronger, till I would groan and weep for a season, and then suddenly leave me.

While in prayer for these various places, they are brought to my mind so vividly. I seem to see the localities, scenery, and the people and their mental and moral condition ; and in the case of individuals I am burdened for, the Holy Spirit makes me feel at times the very state of their hearts and minds ; if they are self-willed, I have a distress in prayer for them ; if they are yielding, I feel a sweet flow of prayer. I

hope many who read this will abandon themselves fully to the sway of the Spirit in prayer; we thereby enter the true priestly life of our precious Jesus. It may be seen in eternity that we accomplished more by our prayers than by all other things combined.

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## XXIV.

## SOME STRIKING INCIDENTS.

IT takes us a long time, it seems, to come into the full realization that the Holy Ghost is actually an Omnipotent person, extending around the whole world, and that He often works in a simultaneous and wondrous way on souls widely separated from each other. A thing that we have believed for years, when brought home to our experience by living facts, seems so new and powerful to us.

In the autumn of 1894, when going through great trouble, I spent much time in fasting and prayer. It pleased my heavenly Father to encourage me by many wondrous instances of the guidance of the Holy Spirit; so striking were they that I feel I ought to print some of them for the encouraging of the hearts of others. A lady in Nottingham, England, wrote me that she felt impelled to tell me how God had used my little book, "White Robes," to lead her into the restoration of the fullness of the Spirit, and that, when she went into a private room to pray, the Spirit, in a very defi-



nite way, put my name into her mind, and a special petition in her heart for me. This special petition given to her for me was, word for word, the very prayer that I was pleading for myself at the same time, five thousand miles away. During those months I used to awake quite regularly at three o'clock in the morning, and get up and spend an hour in prayer. A very dear minister, who walked very close to God, came to visit me, and said that, for some time past, he had strangely awakened at 3 A. M., and had felt led by the Spirit to get up and pray for me. During this time, I received a letter from a devoted man and his wife, whom I had never seen, living in Canada, over two thousand miles from my home, saying that several times they had been strangely awakened at 3 A. M., and clearly impressed by the Holy Spirit to have a season of prayer for me. The evidence was overwhelming that all this was the direct agency of the omnipresent, personal Holy Ghost. My whole being was profoundly impressed by those movements of the Spirit. I saw, in a stronger light than ever before, that the Holy Spirit, as an infinite personality, enveloped the human race as a tender, watchful ocean of love; I saw an extraordinary proof of His compassion and interest in me, an infallible proof that He would answer the prayers which He had so marvelously prompted. Glory to the Triune God forever! At that time, in my reading of the Bible, certain passages would be powerfully given to me by the

Spirit as my own, and in nearly every such instance I would receive, a few days after, a letter from some saint saying they felt led to pray for me, and that while in prayer the Spirit had very definitely given them such a passage of Scripture for me, which was the very passage given to me some days previous.

This leading of the Spirit occurred a great many times; and in one instance four persons, in different parts of the country, each wrote, giving me the same text, as having been impressed on their minds while in prayer for me. I knew these things were not by chance, but from God, and they made those portions of the word doubly precious to my heart. I have scores of those letters filed away and the passages marked, as loving memorials of the minute guidance of the Holy Spirit,

I remember, one week in the early summer of 1895, that many different things were pressing sorely on my heart. The Spirit put on me a burden of prayer which seemed greater than my heart could contain. After pleading with tears for several days, I cried out in an agony, "O Lord, please put this burden of prayer on some other souls; do select some of your dear saints to share this prayer with me." In four days after I received three letters in the same mail—one from the city of Denver, one from the hills of Kentucky, and one from a village in Georgia—each writer saying that on a certain day, the day of my agonizing prayer, they had

been strangely and powerfully burdened in prayer for me, and all the three testified of having the assurance that the prayer would be answered. You can only imagine how the conjoint testimony of these three letters—all received the same moment—went through my innermost heart. I have those wonderful letters yet, every line of them written as under direct inspiration of God.

My poor heart swells with love and my eyes flow with tears of gratitude, and I in memory read over and over the life pages of the marvelous, far-reaching, particular, personal, and precious leadings of the blessed Comforter. The deeper our union with Jesus, the more clearly we recognize the presence of God in every thing and event. One of the reservation secrets of heaven will be to re-turn the pages of our earthly lives and see every moment of our history from God's standpoint, and find that His watchful, overruling presence was hidden in the very places where we least suspected Him. If we look for wonders, we will not likely see them, but if we seek in perfect lowliness to please God, He will give us some wondrous proofs of His being the living God in the little things of our lives.

## XXV.

## PRAYING FOR AN ENEMY.

I AM convinced we have far too shallow views of that command to pray for our enemies. It means a vast more than to say, "God bless our foes." It means that we are to take them on our heart in good earnest, and intercede for them, particularly, lovingly, perseveringly—pray for them till out of a loving heart we can unite their highest welfare with our own.

I have been blessed all my life with a few enemies ; at a few periods in my life with a great many, and sometimes they have been exceedingly bitter. But in reviewing the past, I notice that I have had the fewest enemies and the most popularity when I was the least spiritual and the farthest away from God ; and that, when I have had deepest fellowship with Christ, I have been the most misunderstood by religious people and the most intensely hated by bad people. I can recall many seasons when I felt it a necessity to pray especially both for positive enemies and for Christian people, who had greatly injured me, while they did not intend to be my foes. One such circumstance occurred in the early summer of 1895. A certain very bitter enemy had done many things to greatly damage both me and my family. I had often prayed for him in my secret devotions, but one day I felt drawn to go off alone into a forest and spend some hours in plead-

ing to God for him and his family. At the beginning of my prayer, I tried to exercise great charity for the man by putting myself in his place, and looking at my own miserable self from his standpoint. But the Spirit soon showed me that was the human way, and not the Divine. It came to me that what I needed was to love that man with the identical same love that Jesus had for him ; to pity, sympathize with, and feel toward him exactly as God felt, up to my capacity ; that I was to be a living vessel in such union with the Holy Spirit that Jesus could love him through me, and pour His Divine love through my affections. It was revealed to me that in order to love him as Christ loved, I must utterly abandon my being to the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of becoming a channel of the perfectly unselfish, impartial, disinterested, tender, and boundless compassion of God. I complied with the suggestion of the Spirit, and before I had prayed an hour the fountains of my soul were broken up, my tears flowed like rain ; I felt a warm, soft love for him ; all his welfare of body and soul, all his family, all his temporal and eternal interests, became very precious in my sight.

As I continued to plead with God for his soul's salvation, and for all his welfare in detail, suddenly the Spirit opened to my mind what a lovely Christian that man would make if he was thoroughly washed in Jesus' blood, and filled with the Holy Spirit. I seemed

to see his soul and all his gifts and powers, now so perverted by sin—how lovely they would be if transformed by Divine grace ! As I viewed him under the possibilities of saving grace, he seemed transfigured in my vision. I then prayed that I might feel a Christ-like grief for any trouble that might befall him. From that moment it has been easy and sweet to pray for him, and I never think of him except with a peculiarly tender love.

A few months after, that man had a great calamity which brought pain and sadness to my heart ; yet I was accused of praying the misfortune upon him. Our neighbors and acquaintances can never really know what is in our hearts till that great day. It is infinitely more essential that we actually love our fellows than that we convince them of our love. If Jesus was unable to convince men of His love to them, are we greater than He ? It is the deep *reality* of having the Christ-love flow through us to everybody that we need, far more than the success of showing it to people. I find the more I pray for anyone, the easier it is for me to think well of him, and to look at his conduct in the most favorable light.

Not only must we pray long and fervently for our positive foes, but pray much for religious people who are cold and severe to us ; for if we do not keep our hearts warm and pure, and very tender to everybody on earth, we lose that sweet sense of oneness with

Jesus which is worth more than all the friendships of creatures. It is not my calling to make people love me ; it is my great business to have perfect union with the Holy Spirit, and to love all with God's love, whether they love or have confidence in me or not.

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## XXVI.

## MARVELOUS ANSWER TO PRAYER.

**D**URING the year 1895, the Lord permitted me to have in my life and experience many very wonderful answers to prayer. I wish now to give an account of only one among a great number.

It is well known that the orange groves in Florida were nearly all killed in January, 1895, so that my property, from which I expected a support, was all ruined. I was divinely kept from even a thought of a murmur. I fasted and prayed many days, and made a solemn covenant with God : First, I would ask help of no one except the Lord. Second, that I would not go any deeper in debt. Third, that I would very rigidly give God one-tenth of all He gave to me. My faith had a few testing seasons, but I never lacked, and I was never out of cash money. The infinitely tender dealings of God for the year, in spiritual and physical matters, would fill a book. Here is only one. I had more urgent need for money coming due in November. I knew I had no way to get the money but by prayer,



so all through September and October I prayed much for the funds, and I observed several days of fasting. I was kept in perfect peace, yet intense looking to God. During the last week in October, a poor, sanctified widow fifteen hundred miles from me, and who had never seen me, wrote to me that she was very powerfully impressed of the Spirit to spend a whole day in prayer for my temporal supplies, and that God spoke into her heart that He would supply my needs. I needed one hundred dollars by November 10th, and another hundred in December, but my little prayer only took in the first hundred. On the 6th of November, after supper, just before beginning the weekly holiness meeting in my house, I was walking in the library, talking with the Lord of my deep need ; suddenly the Holy Ghost opened up to my mind a fresh and strong view of the Fatherly provision of God for me. My whole soul was melted into love and peace ; tears of joy flowed down my face ; there was something just like a voice talking in my heart, which said, " Money is nothing to Me ; it is only My wrapping-paper, and is inexhaustible ; just give Me continually your warmest love and perfect obedience, and I will attend to your finances."

With these words in my mind, I felt that my prayer was answered. In four more days the money would be needed, and I did not have my mind on anybody on earth to supply it. On the 9th I received a letter from a sanctified business man, several thousand

miles away, saying that he "felt a strong impulse to send me a check for over two hundred dollars." The receipt of the check did not surprise me at all, for my faith was expecting God to do something ; but I walked into the forest and sat down on a log, and just gazed for an hour at the great and living God, and adored His matchless love and the reality of His personal presence. I did not know which to admire most, the movement of the Holy Ghost on the widow to pray, or on the dear brother to send the money. And then to see the accuracy of the Lord's time-table, that the supply should reach me just on time to a day. I at once took out one-tenth for the Lord.

Now I have written this only for God's glory, to encourage the child of God to have perfect faith in Him, and I earnestly recommend the rigid principles of giving the tenth to God of all that we receive.

The Lord wants us to pray very particularly and persistently for all things which are covered by His promises, and it is a good way to prove our earnestness by fasting, especially in emergencies. God is now waiting to work thousands of wonders for His children, in saving, or healing, or filling, or providing, if they will deeply and perseveringly plead His promises through the merit of Jesus.

## XXVII.

## THE DIVINE PULL.

**O**FTENTIMES, when I have been traveling on the cars, going at the rate of thirty or forty miles per hour, I have felt the train give a sudden pull, because the engineer had turned on more steam to increase the speed to fifty miles per hour. To one who travels a good deal, and has a keen sense of motion, every movement of the train can be readily detected. I can detect when the train turns in the least to the right or left, or the slightest pressure of the air-brake on the wheels, or the least increase of speed.

This sensitiveness to the motion of a train should be realized in the spiritual life. If we keep in a very humble and crucified state of mind, and in unbroken fellowship with the Holy Spirit, the interior sensibilities of the soul will be just as keen as those of the body. We can detect the least slackening of speed, or the least veering to the right or left; and, blessed be God, we can be conscious when the heavenly Engineer turns on more spiritual pressure.

It will often happen in secret prayer, when all the faculties of the soul are open to the sway of the Spirit, that we can feel a Divine pull upon our hearts, a sudden yearning of the soul after God stronger than hitherto; a deep, sweet passion for Christ takes hold upon the fountains of desire; a longing, an intense

craving to be just like Jesus pervades the whole mind.

At such moments we feel magnetized ; we are conscious that an infinite load-stone is drawing our desires, affections, choices, and imaginations up into the brightness and sweetness of God.

Such moments are worth more than we can conjecture. We should make everything of them. When the Spirit gives us such gentle pulls to Himself, we should open the throttle-valve of the heart to its uttermost ; let the tears flow ; let hours, if need be, glide away unheeded, even if it is midnight ; let the Divine nature open its great, sweet splendors to our mind ; let us push our way at such times into the very bosom of Jesus ; let us take the hint of His drawing, and make deep and passionate love with Him. At such times, let us spread before Him all our unselfish longings for the salvation of souls, special petitions for relatives and friends and foes, for great Revivals, for mission-fields. While these sweet seraphic winds blow down upon us, let us stretch every sail, and oil the bottom of our ships, and make all the speed possible. Many a season of prayer is without fruit because the " Amen " is said just about the time the blessed Spirit is getting His fingers on the heart-strings for a heavenly pull.

In the past few months, more than ever in my past life, I am learning to detect the gentle movements of the Holy Spirit in my soul in prayer. Sometimes I

begin praying with a weary, dull feeling ; my thoughts seem dry, my affections seem becalmed, and this dryness lingers for ten or twenty minutes, but by fixing my thoughts on God and asking Him to breathe in me the very prayer which will most please the Father, and then by patiently waiting and pleading the infinite merit of my elder Brother, by and by the brightness begins to come ; the heart is melted ; tears of love and thanksgiving flow ; an inexpressible sweetness settles into all my being. Then all difficulties, all sorrows, all hardships, all burdens, all loneliness, all anxiety of every sort and degree, sink away below the horizon, and I find myself in a vast prairie of blooming flowers, and magnificent vistas, and clear skies, and singing birds, and gently flowing streams, and my whole being seems dissolved into great drops of love.

I find it pays immensely to watch the movements of the Spirit, and to abandon all the activities of my mind in co-operation with His work. Oh, that we may get so intimate with the Holy Spirit as to take His slightest hint, and feel His gentlest pull, and always yield a loving response to His wishes ! What an infinite compliment that our heavenly Father should be willing to indicate His thoughts and His desires toward us through the emotions of His Spirit ! Let us appreciate the least token we have from God. If we respond to His gentle pulls in prayer, it will enable us to more readily detect any warning or premonition

which He may give us of approaching danger or of the blessedness of some golden opportunity.

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## XXVIII.

## CLIMAX OF SORROW.

IN one of Miss Havergal's letters, she calls attention to the striking climax in Exodus 3: 7, in which God speaks of the notice He takes of all His people's troubles; "seen their affliction," "heard their cry," and "knows their sorrows." There are some calamities that are visible, such as slavery, scourging, fire, death, disease, poverty, old age, loneliness, malformation of body, etc. Such afflictions appear to the eye, and from the tender-hearted call forth sympathetic tears and efforts of relief. Such afflictions are easily recognized and comprehended, and the great mass of mankind never seem to apprehend any affliction beyond those of visible troubles.

Then there is a second degree of trouble, which exists mainly in the soul or mind, in the sensibilities, the affectional nature, the thoughts and memory. Even when there are no outward marks of calamity on person or property visible to the eye, there may still be trouble that shakes and shatters the whole mental frame, causing piercing cries and burning tears. That muffled moan, that soft sob, that pitiful wail, those hot tears, have histories behind them; like the round sea

waves that break their hearts in moans on the shore, they have come from some distant storm far away on the sea of life. But still such sorrows can be told; they can be described in language and comprehended by the understanding. They belong to that region of our nature which can be expressed.

Then there is a third degree of sorrow which lies away down in the immortal spirit, taking hold of the very fountains and springs of our being, so overpowering all the moral and mental and nervous powers as to be beyond all expression, either to the eye or in words. These sorrows are like those great vibrations at the bottom of the ocean—never reported to eye or ear; like the million-fold heat which melts the center of the globe, unknown to those who walk above it. Now, the infinitely loving Father sees all the affliction which can become visible, hears all the cries that can express woe or trouble, and then, in the great depths of sorrow unseeable and unutterable, His tender, all-knowing heart takes it all in. In the nature of things, the love and sympathy of the best saints on earth go only a short ways; but the infinite heart of Jesus travels on and out and down to take in every form of pain and sorrow. His precious, healing blood can spread its cleansing and soothing power through body, soul, and spirit, to the last fibre of our being. For every unspeakable sorrow in human experience, there is an unspeakable fullness of comfort, peace, and joy in the



blessed Holy Spirit ; for when God said, " I know their sorrows," it was not merely to tell His omniscience, but to affirm that His omniscience was all engaged to deliver and save, and heal the sorrow.

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## XXIX.

## OUR NEED OF HUMILITY.

NO grace is more befitting to us as human beings than that of perfect humility. As a race, we are the weakest, and poorest, and blindest of any order of intelligences we know of. Our bodies are made out of dust, our breath is in our nostrils, and our spiritual and mental nature is depraved. We have the weakness of the earth, the infirmities of the animals, and the depravity of the demons. We come in the world the most helpless of all creatures. Surely, if there is any race of beings in the universe that have any right to pride and vanity, we are not that race, and it is only a species of insanity that begets in us any degree of pride. In order to see my need of boundless humility, let me look at my nothingness. All creatures around me excel me in some one or more particulars. There is hardly an animal, or bird, or insect, that cannot in some particular excel me, either in speed of motion, or beauty of song, or hardness, or docility, or some trait, which makes me as a creature feel my inferiority. And when I look on the members of my race, I can

not find one who does not excel me in some gift, or talent, or grace, or skill, or advantage, or combination of gifts. The worst of my fellows have in them some natural traits—it may be a softness in the eye, or a sweetness in the voice, or a force of will, or a grace of motion, or a teachableness of mind, or relative disposition to goodness—which surpass me; or they have sinned against less light, under worse temptations, and have had less advantages than ever I had.

I have often read this in books, but the time has come when I feel it to be true. When the Holy Spirit shows us our nothingness, it is so easy for us to find thousands about us who are superior to ourselves, and under His illumination we can find something to love and to admire in all our fellow-creatures.

Another reason why I should be perfectly humble, is because I never lived a day that I have not been a tax to somebody. From the day I was born some of my fellow-beings have had to nurse me, or to cook, or to wash for me, or to wait on me; and as the years have gone by, how many untold millions of services have been rendered to a poor worm like me by thousands and thousands of my fellow-beings! In all these years, how many attentions of kindness have I received, how many gifts of love, how many kind words, how many earnest prayers have ascended for me, how many services to the needs of my body, my mind, my spirit, my temporal and intellectual and religious

matters ! And how many times have I wounded my friends, and grieved those who loved me most, and disappointed the hopes of many ! Perhaps I have never lived a day that I have not caused somebody more or less pain, or anxiety, or trouble. My manners have been unpleasant, my voice harsh, my words unwise, my acts open to criticism, my best deeds have had flaws in them, or attended by some infirmity which rendered them less potent than they should have been. In the midst of such facts, for me to have one atom of pride, or self-esteem, or resentment, or coolness, or hard feeling toward any of my fellows, would be a gross barbarism. And then, when I think of the grief I have been to my Guardian Angel, and the loved ones in heaven who perhaps look down upon me all the time ; and over and above all this, when I think of the grief I have caused my blessed Jesus, and heavenly Father, and the Holy Spirit, surely nothing so benefits me as to sink always in my own nothingness. All pride of any form or degree springs from self-esteem and overestimate of ourselves. Could we always remember our true nothingness and inferiority, we should never be angry at any creature, we should never say that we have been injured or wronged by anybody, we should never be unkind or severe or impatient with the faults of others, we should never feel hurt at the conduct of another towards us.

If we sink constantly into our nothingness and the

perfect will of God, it is impossible for anybody or anything on earth to do us a real damage. Strictly speaking, no one in the universe can do us any harm but ourselves. What may seem to be a mean treatment that any human being can give us, if accepted in absolute self-abnegation, and taken as from the loving hand of God, will inevitably work for our good. Our nothingness is the fortress in which we should hide ; around that fort our heavenly Father places His omnipotence as a wall, and no event or any act of others can penetrate that wall and reach us, without passing through the Divine will. Perfect humility is the doorway into the deepest peace, the greatest deadness to self and to the world ; it is the condition of our sweetest union with Divine nature. Whenever anything occurs that is painful, or disagreeable, or seemingly injurious, or damaging to our souls or bodies or property, let us at once consider our nothingness and utter demerit, and, from that standpoint, grace will flow into us, and give us strength to endure all things with a meekness and a love which will crown the soul with victory. True humility is not a spasmodic virtue which can be received as a mere blessing once for all, but we must study to be humble, make it a habit of the mind, and determine by the aid of Divine grace to always put ourselves at the bottom. It is an experience which we are to grow in. Wesley wrote to Asbury that he studied to be little and lowly. No wonder God could

so mightily use him ; while others are studying to be great and pushing their own interests, let us really desire to be like Jesus, keep always in our thoughts how to renounce ourselves, and sacrifice ourselves for God and the welfare of others. The more thoroughly we humble ourselves, the more truly God is exalted, for, Christ is glorified in us just in proportion as we do not seek our own. When self is always renounced, then the joy of God becomes a continual experience in the heart.

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## XXX.

## THE FORMS OF DIVINE LIFE.

JUST as all the character and life of the Godhead was formed and expressed in the person and life of our blessed Jesus, so, in a similar way, it is God's design that the fullness of the Christ-life shall be reformed and expressed in us by the power of the indwelling and infilling of the Holy Spirit. That infinite life of spotless, lowly, gentle love is seeking vessels in which to shape and spread itself abroad in the world, and the Holy Spirit is the person who imparts and unfolds this Divine life in us.

In order that this life may perfectly fill us, every obstruction to its inflow in heart and mind and habit must be purged away ; and then the Spirit, in taking possession of us, will naturally take the form of our pe-

cular individuality and innocent characteristics. The Christ-life is a unit, but the living forms in which it may be expressed are as manifold as are the living vessels that will receive it. As the great ocean pouring itself into the various inlets along the shore will take the form and depth and other peculiarities of those inlets, so the infinite sea of Divine life, in being poured into His creatures, will assume the various forms of those creatures, and blend itself with all their God-given faculties and temperaments.

The blood in our heart takes the shape of the heart, but as it is thrown out through all the body, it shapes itself to the arteries and veins down to the least molecule of each organ. Thus Christ is the infinite heart of life, and by the Holy Ghost He pulsates that life out into all the members of His mystical body—into youth and old age, male and female, nervous and phlegmatic temperaments—shaping itself according to each one's make and endowment. In like manner this Holy Ghost life can flow through all the natural affections and adapt itself to their form and manifestation. It is God's revealed will that all the natural affections—connubial, parental, filial, fraternal—shall exist in spotless purity, and be the appropriate channels for showing forth the very life of Jesus that circulated in heaven. Hence the need of the uttermost purification of every part of our being, that nothing may hinder the infinite person of Christ from filling our spirit,

mind, and body . Though the life takes our individual human form, yet the life is Divine, and its power in and through us is superhuman.

“ We have this treasure in earthen vessels,” and the reason why this precious life is put into our earthen vessels is because it may more clearly be seen “ that the excellency is of God,” and not of us. Only think of the great honor given to us, that we can give individual form and expression to the very life of the Lamb of God. The air I breathe takes the fashion of my lungs and the tones of my voice which no other in the human race will duplicate. So our loving Lord wants each of us to breathe in His life and Spirit, and give some form or voice or expression for Him which none but us can give. Hence, instead of fretting over our peculiar make-up, or criticising that of others, let us remember that God will not undo the mechanism or form of our individualism, but His plan is to purge away all sin and self, and have each of our diverse individualities utterly filled with His life and Spirit. Not to chafe or wrestle with my formation, but to perfectly and always yield it to the possession of the Holy Spirit, is the way to victory and blessing.



## XXXI.

## THE SPIRIT OF CRUCIFIXION.

THE act of crucifixion is one thing, but the Spirit in which the crucifixion is to be borne is another. In some respects, the act may be brief and finished ; but the inward heart disposition that should pervade crucifixion is a continuous principle, extending through life, ever-widening its range over a multiplicity of applications, and growing in intensity to the end. This divinely beautiful spirit of self-immolation cannot be defined. It can only be faintly described. It is a heart-quality, a soul-essence, too fluid to be held in by words. If we could get a vision of the soul of Jesus, from the Last Supper to His death on the cross, and have a clear, spiritual discernment of all the thoughts and feelings and affections and sympathies, and every quality of disposition that was in His nature during those long hours, in such a spiritual vision we would see the full-sized mind appropriate to crucifixion.

Thousands have had, in greater or less degrees, a spiritual revelation into this history of the soul of Jesus. Such a vision can only be given by the Holy Ghost, for it is infinitely beyond the natural reason and imagination.

In the same proportion that we discern the inward spirit Christ had during those hours, in that proportion can we drink of that spirit, until we can suffer, bleed,

and die in our measure, with the very same dispositions He had.

It is a silent spirit. It suffers without advertising the depth of its suffering. A dog or a pig will howl and squeal at the least pain or fright, but the lamb quivers and suffers in silence. It can weep until the fountains of tears are exhausted, and then it goes on weeping interior tears in the heart. Because the outward tears have ceased, its cruel critics think it has no pain, but God can see those hot, invisible tears of the spirit, and they fall upon His cheek and move His infinite compassion. It can be snubbed, scolded, criticised, misunderstood, misrepresented, and checked and hindered in a thousand ways without a groan, or a kick, or a trace of threatening or impudence.

It is sworn to eternal submissiveness. Out of a passion of Divine love, it has calmly signed the death-warrant of self. It can have a thousand little gifts and treasures, and harmless earthly pleasures, and pleasant hopes, and friendly ties snatched out of its hand, without clutching the fingers to hold on to them. It gently and sweetly lets everything go. It can obey God and be rushing at full speed on lines of service and duty for Him, and then, at the touch of God's providential air-brake, it can be brought to an instantaneous standstill, without shaking the train to pieces by a single jar or the least jostling of the will from its perfect repose in Jesus.

It is a flexible spirit, with no plan of its own. It can be turned by the finger of God in any direction without a moment's warning. It can walk into a dungeon or a throne, into a hut or a palace, with equal ease and freedom. It has lost its own will in union with God, and partakes of the movements of the Divine mind, as a floating cloud partakes of the movements of the air which encircles it. It can wear old, threadbare clothes, and live on plain food, with a thankful and sweet disposition, without even a thought of envy, or coveting the nice things of others. It looks with a quiet, secret, joyful contempt on all the honors and pleasures, and learning and culture, and the honorable splendors of earth. It inwardly despises what other people are longing to get hold of. This is because it sees into heaven, and is so fascinated with the magnitude of coming glories that even the pretty and honorable things of this world look ugly to it.

It embraces suffering as its natural food. The rugged cross, which frightens so many Christians, is embraced by this spirit with a sweet, subtle joy, because it knows that all suffering will enlarge and sweeten its love. It is love on fire, and seeks to pour itself out in avenues of self-abnegation. What other Christians shun as a hardship, it gladly accepts as an opportunity of sweeter union with God. It longs for nothing but more love. It likes to die over and over again for the sake of widening its ocean of love. It loves its ene-

mies with a sweet, gentle, yearning affection, utterly beyond what they would be willing to believe. It can be bruised and trampled on, and turn with a quivering, speechless lip, and a tear-dimmed eye, and kiss and pray for the foot that, under the pretense of religious duty, is trampling it in the dust. This is no fancy sketch; I mean what I say. This spirit, like St. Paul, longs for the coming of Jesus, and yearns to be clothed upon with glorification. It would gladly never have any physical pleasure but for the legitimate needs and recreations of the body. In the language of the wise man, "It eats for strength, and not for the mere pleasure of appetite."

This spirit will not receive human honor into itself. If it is praised or honored by its fellows, instead of eating it as a sweet morsel, it offers it up instantly to the Lord, as the angel did with the good dinner which was presented to him by Manoah. Its highest delight is in sinking into God and being little. It loves to humble itself, both before God and man. It shuns debate and strife, and theological argument.

It is modest and retiring, and loves to get out of God's way, and see Him work. It would rather see the ark capsize, and the cherubim all broken, than to put forth its finger to meddle with God's authority. It does not make others wear its sackcloth. It would rather take other people's sufferings on itself than to take their joys. It has a deep, interior vision of the

soul of Jesus, and is smitten with the Divine beauty of Christ's inner heart-life, and loves to repeat over again the feeling which Christ had. It has glimpses of the face of Jesus when He was dying. It sees the purple tint in His features as His head dropped upon His breast, and sees a glory in it which eclipses the splendor of the tall white angels.

When the soul enters sanctification, it is just the beginning of this spirit, which is to spread, intensify, and brighten until crucifixion becomes an all-consuming passion, a sweetly sorrowful, sadly beautiful flame of self-abnegation, which takes hold of all sorts of woes, and troubles, and mortifications, and pains, and poverities, and hardships, as a very hot fire takes hold on wet logs and makes out of them fresh fuel for more self-sacrificing love.

This is the spirit that opens the gate of heaven without touching it. This is the spirit that wears out the patience of persecutors, that softens the heart of stone, that in the long run converts enemies into friends, that touches the heart of sinners, that wins its way through a thousand obstacles, that outwits the genius of the devil, and that makes the soul that has it as precious to God as the apple of His eye.

## XXXII.

## THE TENDER LAMB.

THERE is a startling suggestion as to the revelation of our Lord's character in the use of the word lamb, in the book of Revelation. The word "lamb," as used in Revelation, is a word seldom used in the Bible. The word lamb, as used in most places in the New Testament, is in the Greek—*amnos*; but in every instance when the word lamb is used in Revelation, the Greek is *arnion*. This little word *arnion* means a *little, tender lamb*.

What a stream of Christly character flows in upon our vision through the word *arnion*. From it let us make the following suggestions :

I. God reveals Himself to us in the names which He assumes, and there is a progressive unfolding of the different phases of the character and attributes of God, from Genesis to Revelation. The first name He takes in the Bible is God, in the original *Elohim*, which signifies the uncreated One—the Creator. The next name He takes is Lord, of which the original is *Jehovah*, which signifies the living One, One who has ever lived and will live forever. It also signifies the life-giver. Whenever you find the word Lord in the Old Testament printed in small capitals, that is to indicate that the original word is *Jehovah*. The next name found in the Bible is the word Lord, spelled with a capital

“I,” and the rest of the words in small letters, of which the original word is *adoni*. This word *adoni* signifies supporter, upholder, strengthener. Thus we have, in these three words, the Trinity. The Father is the uncreated, eternal Fountain; the Son, the eternal Life-giver; and the Holy Spirit, the eternal Supporter, Comforter. As we pass on down through the holy volume, we come to other names and titles of God too numerous to expound in this place. He is called our Shepherd. (Ps. 23.) When we come to the New Testament, we find all the names and titles of God in the Old Testament are revealed in brighter and sweeter forms. *Elohim* is revealed as Father. *Jehovah* is revealed as Jesus and the Christ and the lamb of God. *Adoni* is revealed as the Comforter and Sanctifier and Illuminator. But all these names and titles of God glow with intenser meaning, and widen and deepen in their significance in the manifold ways in which they are used throughout the Gospels and the Epistles.

The book of Revelation was written about a hundred years after the birth of Jesus, and by that Disciple whom Jesus loved, who was very aged, and his whole being flooded and matured with Christ-likeness, and eminently fitted to be the translucent vase in which God could pour the ultimate and ineffable splendors of His character and word. And so I take it that this word *arnion*—that is, “tender lamb”—gives us the ultimate and most divinely-exquisite insight into the



eternal loveliness of Jesus possible for us to receive in this state of being. As we move down the stream of that revelation which the infinite and eternal One has made of Himself, we find many tributaries of added truth and light pouring into the central river, and these confluent streams of names and titles and attributes and characteristics bear us on a tide of ever-increasing light and truth and glory, until we are borne out into the boundless, silvery sea of the Godhead, whose names and character are "God is light," "God is love," "God is a tender Lamb."

Such a revelation of God is exactly opposite to what any man-made theories would represent Him.

II. From this word *arnion* we gather the suggestion of the progressive unfolding of the perceptions of the living God in our own minds and experiences. The average sinner, though living in nominal Christian lands, with Bibles and Churches, has a very crude and almost utterly unscriptural idea of God, very little superior to the idea which a Hottentot has of the Almighty.

The very thought of God is that He seldom entertains, and then it is mostly an annoyance and a pest to Him. When a sinner becomes serious, and thinks of repentance and a new life, his conception of God is not that Scriptural idea of an infinite, loving, personal Creator, who loves him, and who loves to pardon and wash his soul, but it is a sort of confused and a cold

view of God, which is made up of power, and distance, and severity, and harshness, with a touch of majesty and some other attributes. If he does not hear warm and evangelical preaching, he is very apt to drift toward the old Calvinistic conception of God, which, though it very properly recognizes in God His eternity, and immutability, and omniscience, and justice, and other blessed majesties which belong to Him, yet it throws all the conceptions of God into the frosty dome of a cold winter night, which does not melt the heart with real pardon and peace.

If this awakened sinner is led a step farther, and gets the conception of God as merciful and compassionate, he then begins to form more angelical views of the Lord. If his desire for salvation increases, and he has some one to teach him, or can get hold of Bible truth by some other means, he will get a perception of Jesus as his substitute, bearing his death penalty, and willing to pardon him through simple faith.

When he believes and receives pardon that lets in a flood of new light in his mind respecting God and salvation, he then begins to apprehend God as a Father and Jesus as a personal Savior.

But there are yet vast regions of Bible truth concerning God which seem to him a puzzling twilight. His perceptions of the Trinity, their distinct personalities and attributes, hang like an undiscernible haze in his mind, If this converted man aims to live a full

Bible life, he will soon find a deep need of inward purity of nature. If he is led through the appropriate steps to that experience, and has a clear apprehension of Jesus as his omnipotent cleanser, and will enter that state, very soon after this act of pure faith there will come to his understanding another sun-burst of glorious perceptions respecting God. There will spring up in his vision an intuitive vision of the Godhead as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He will perceive these ineffable personalities with a clearness and joy of which he had no previous idea. Then the different names and titles of God in the Bible will be luminous and precious to him.

It is likely that this man will be led through a series of trials, sore temptations, heavy crosses, misunderstandings of others, manifold losses, and intricate manipulations of Divine Providence, which will serve as a furnace, with its white heat, to thoroughly anneal all the previous operations of grace in his soul.

In this *annealing* process he will discover many things in his constitution or peculiar makeup which need grinding away, or mellowing and softening and sweetening, to make him perfectly homogeneous with the characteristics of God. When the tribulation and the furnace have done their work on him, he will have a celestialized vision, a far-penetrating perception, into the fine and ineffable traits of God. He will discern things in each of the three Divine persons, glimpses of

their several majesties; he will feel an undefinable love for each of them which he cannot put into words. He has now reached that country in which the visions of God which were given to Moses, Daniel, and John become familiar to His daily thoughts.

Sometimes persons in this state of soul will have sudden flashes of Divine light in their inner spirit, in which they will see a long, interminable vista into the Divine nature. All saints who are favored with these Divine flashes bear uniform testimony that it seems to them as if an avenue of glory was opened to them in a stream of beautiful, soft light, increasing with ever-dazzling whiteness in the distance, for hundreds and thousands of miles away, brighter and brighter, until it is lost in an undistinguished blaze of blinding light.

This vision of light, for which there are no words, corresponds to the unfolding of the Lord Jesus to His true follower, which is an ever-increasing climax of purity, tenderness, and love, rising in ever-increasing degrees of simplicity and lowliness, until, instead of being the great and overwhelming *Elohim* which broke the morn of creation, it is the unutterable love and tenderness of a little lamb. Oh, what a journey the mind has traveled across that vast stretch of spiritual territory, where his perceptions of God were wild, confused, and semi-heathen, to that state of complete transformation, where the three persons of the Godhead have become a constant, sweet vision to his under-

standing, and in whose infinite love he reposes, with all his faculties outstretched in longing desire and gentle confidence, like the snowy-plumed sea-birds that float on the undulations of a glittering sea !

Our perceptions of Jesus grow just in proportion as we become united to Him in our inner being, and as we become like Him in our affections and will. And on the other hand, the clearer and deeper our vision into His personality and character, the more deeply we drink of His precious nature, and become like Him. So that a brighter vision ever leads us to a sweeter experience of His love, and then a stronger love is ever widening and clarifying our vision. Thus it is like standing between two mirrors, which reflect the same image back and forth ten thousand times—the vision ever increasing the love, and the love ever sharpening the vision.

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